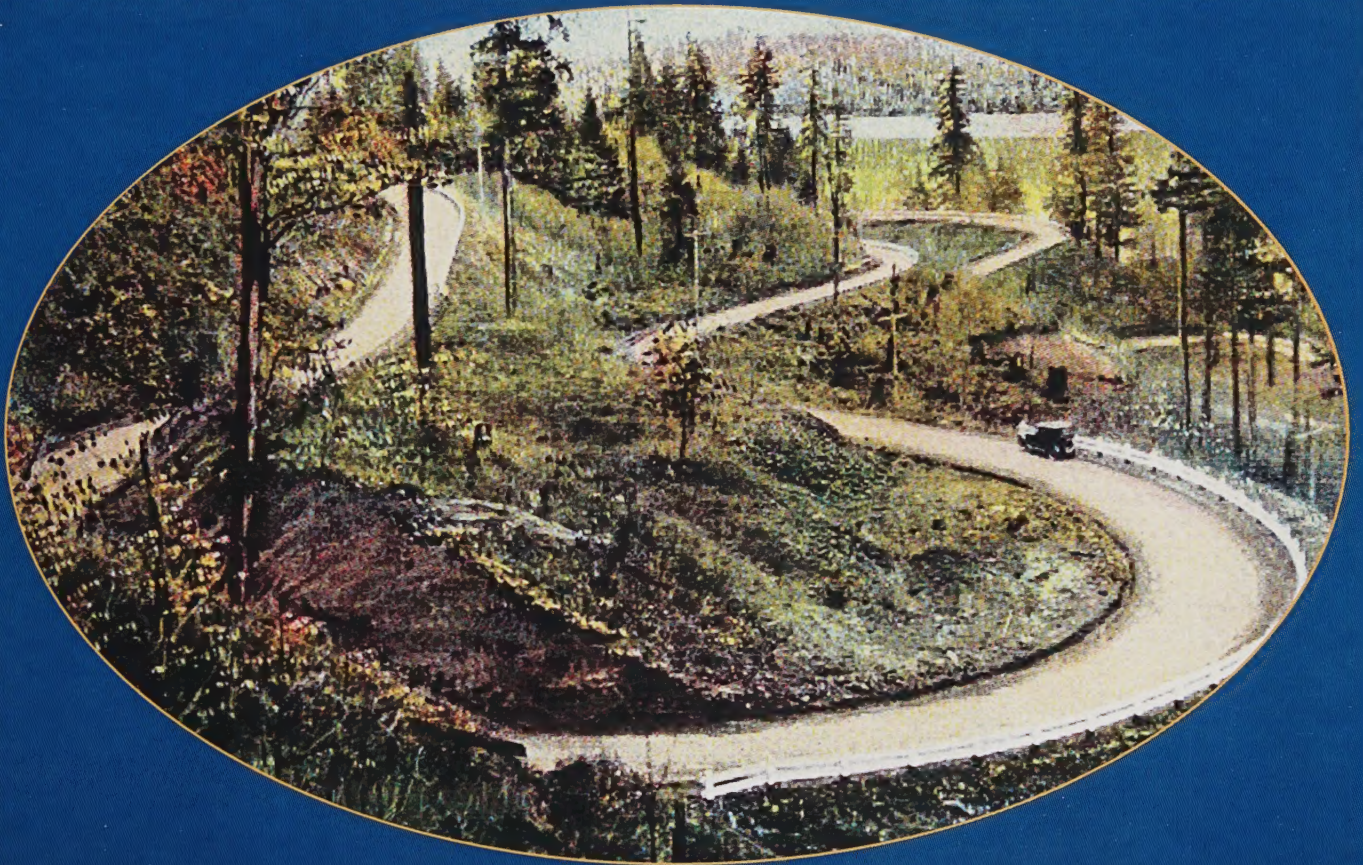




Mr. Bruce R. Berney
3441 Grand Ave.
Astoria, OR 97103

ROAD OF DIFFICULTIES



Building the Lower Columbia River Highway

Michael C. Taylor

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HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS

The collection of Michael C. Taylor, Portland, Oregon

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Oregon Department of Transportation archives, Salem, Oregon

CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHS

Michael C. Taylor, Portland, Oregon

SKETCHES

Guard Fence, page 28, "Substantial and Attractive Guard Rail on Oregon Road," *Public Roads*, March 1920

Viaducts, page 65, *Historic American Engineering Record*,

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FRONT COVER

Bugby Loops on the Lower Columbia River Highway, from a historical postcard published by Wesley Andrews Co., Portland Oregon; photograph by A.M. Prentiss, Portland, Oregon.

BACK COVER

Hand-colored images from historical postcards depicting the Lower Columbia River Highway, clockwise from top left: near Bradley State Park, Clatsop Crest, published by Lipschuetz & Katz, Portland, Oregon; between Little Jack Falls and Prescott Point, published by Cross & Dimmitt, Portland; Prescott Point Half Viaduct, published by Wesley Andrews Co., Portland; at Prescott Point, published by Oregon News Company, Portland; photographs by A.M. Prentiss, Portland, Oregon.

FRONTISPIECE

Lower Columbia River Highway at Little Jack Falls, looking east, from a hand-colored image published by Lipschuetz and Katz, Portland, Oregon; photo by A.M. Prentiss, Portland, Oregon.

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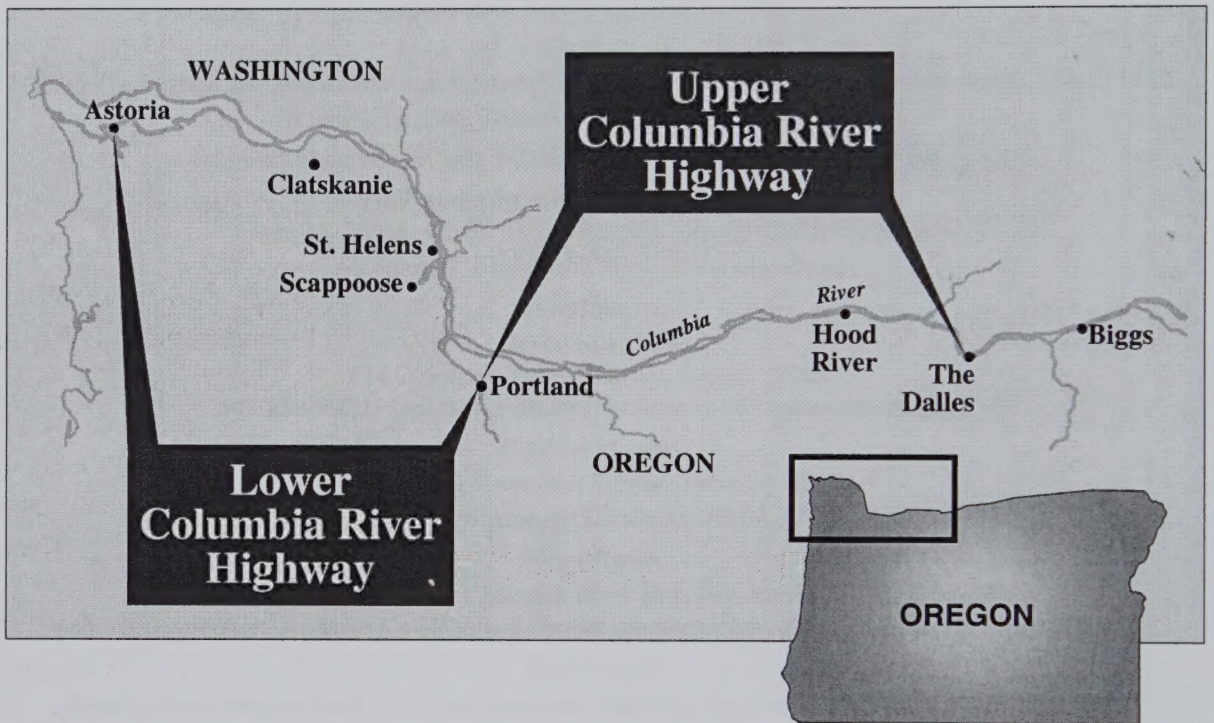
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World Headquarters located in Wallowa, Oregon U.S.A.
(at the old Abbie Riggle place on Bear Creek Road).

*The good road and the road of difficulties you have made to cross.
And where they cross, the place is holy.*

– Black Elk's Prayer



Acknowledgments

*History is merely a list of surprises.
It can only prepare us to be surprised yet again.*

– Kurt Vonnegut

Piecing together the history of the Lower Columbia River Highway was a challenge. Almost all of the information had to be winnowed from primary sources. The events surrounding the planning and construction happened long ago. While nearness lends familiarity, distance brings perspective and because some of the story involved manipulation and rancor, a frank written history of the lower highway would not have been possible in the years immediately following its completion.

Old photographs and first-hand reports were helpful in establishing a sense of place and time. Some of the best sources of historical information were the museums, city halls, public works departments, and surveyors' offices of St. Helens, Vernonia, Rainier, Clatskanie, and Astoria.

The Oregon Department of Transportation's history center and archives were the source of a majority of the historic photographs. It would have taken much longer to find them, but for the help and support of Dwight Smith, now retired from ODOT. As co-author of *Historic Highway Bridges of Oregon* and of the successful National Register of Historic Places nomination application for the Historic Columbia River Highway, Smith knew about all of the information short cuts.

During my initial visits to his office in Salem, he arranged visits to the archives, roadway engineering office, photo and bridge archives and even reprographic services. Our meeting yielded a dozen names and phone numbers, a photocopy of surveyor Frank Drinkhall's 1924 road log, and the opportunity to borrow original copies of the State Highway Engineer's Biennial Reports from 1913 through 1920.

Subsequent trips to Salem resulted in the discovery of historic photographs and original blueprints of the highway as well as the abandonment and betterment records that redefined its course over the years. James Norman, who had recently conducted reconnaissance trips, provided valuable input on the state of the Beaver Creek bridges. These sources, combined with USGS maps of the area, made it possible to follow the original course of the road with complete accuracy.

I also corresponded briefly with Gary Halvorson, reference archivist of the Oregon State Archives. He referred me to the offices of Deborah Bogstad, clerk of the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners and her cranky old microfilm reader. A more tedious morning could not be imagined but the time spent at that machine yielded some of the only useful information on the early realignment of St. Helens Road in Multnomah County.

Dr. Robert Hadlow, Senior Historian, ODOT Region 1, was generous with his time and expertise, providing copies of two extensive bibliographies on the Historic Columbia River Highway. These, combined with key articles gleaned from the Multnomah County Library's microfilm records and those of local papers in the various counties, offered local color to pair with dry records. I cannot thank Dr. Hadlow and Mr. Smith enough for their enthusiasm, support, and willingness to share what they knew about the history of road.

Even after years of work, many questions remain unanswered; this is the unfortunate result of conducting research on a subject after all of the major players have gone to their heavenly reward and can no longer be interviewed.

In his book, *In The Oregon Country*, George Palmer Putnam said, "Normal men, if they are reasonably good, hope to go to heaven. Westerners, if they are off the beaten track, hope for a railroad, and if they have one road they hope for another!"

Here, then, is the story of a road that many hoped for. It's still a lot like heaven if you have a quiet day, time to spare, and a good imagination.

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Making Plans

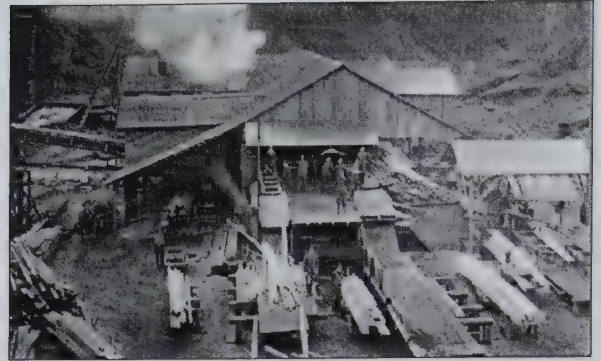
*Make no little plans;
they have no magic to stir men's blood
and probably themselves will not be realized.
Make big plans; aim high in hope and work.*

– Daniel H. Burnham

The Lower Columbia River Highway was a dream that became reality after years of planning, blasting, building, political scheming, recall elections, and the combined hard work of numerous engineers and laborers. A fraternal twin to the Historic Columbia River Highway that stretches from Troutdale to The Dalles, the lower road represents half of the first major paved highway completed in the United States. Today, however, few remember that fact. Contemporary tourist guides and literature do little to help. While the eastern half of the highway in the scenic Columbia River Gorge became the darling of preservationists, historians, and hikers, the lower portion of the road is referred to only as Highway 30, when it is mentioned at all.

The highway's beginning—or at least the idea for it—came in the 1890s, an era of economic troubles and difficult times across the nation. From 1893 to 1896, for instance, the United States suffered a financial panic that caused almost five hundred banks to fail. The spirit of hope and expectation had changed to panic and fear following factory closures, violent strikes, civil disorder, and falling prices for farm produce. Barter replaced money in many cases because money was unavailable. In the towns on the Lower Columbia River—in Clatsop, Columbia, and Multnomah counties—spuds and shingles were legal tender, and many folks buried their money when they had any to bury.

By some accounts, the old growth forests of the Columbia River Valley once stood “thick as hair on a dog's back on the mountain rolling back from the river.” But now light seasons in the logging camps, chief source of employment and revenue in the area, provided even more bad news. Then in 1896, the election of President William McKinley triggered a rise in prosperity.



Loggers and sawmills were the economic mainstays for Oregon communities such as Rainier, shown here in about 1910.

“Since the election of McKinley,” the *Rainier Review* announced in November, “we can hear again the whistle of Muckle Brothers’ logging donkey, which was silent a long time before the election, and which goes to prove that logging is again starting up on this creek.”

Logging operations traditionally used teams of oxen to haul felled logs. “It was a strangely silent life, with few words or songs and little laughter, just work of the hardest sort, and no

place, nothing to go to and no way of getting there but through the trackless forest,” Oliver Greeley Hughson wrote about the first logging operations along the lower Columbia River. “The ring of the faller’s ax and the buckers’ saw, the creaking of yokes, bawling of the goaded ox and the strange sound of the sliding turn of logs, the hoarse commands and picturesque oaths of the bull whacker and the falling crash of the toppled forest giant—these were the sounds of that day.”



Planks cut from first-growth Douglas fir, Columbia County, Oregon

But as the stands of timber nearer the water began to disappear, more efficient ways of moving wood to the river were needed. Steam-powered donkey engines and rails in conjunction with high lines were innovations that made the work much easier; furthermore, flumes that carried logs in a watery trough for miles could operate for years with little maintenance.

During the same time in Multnomah County, Portland held a preeminent place in shipping and receiving, dry-dock repair, and growth. Its plum position as most-favored port frustrated Astoria, St. Helens, Columbia City, and Linnton, all of whom coveted that honor—as well as the wealth of the state's largest city. Near the turn of the twentieth century, Portland



Downtown Portland near the turn of the twentieth century

A logging railroad, starting inland from Goble in 1901, began operation on a large scale in the summer of 1902. Within six months, it was responsible for bringing out fifty rafts of logs and keeping the logging trains running late into the night. By fall, thirty logging railroads, averaging four miles in length, were in operation on the lower Columbia.

Before long, the forests in the lowlands along the Columbia River had been logged over. The rich timber harvest had brought into existence such riverside communities in Columbia County as Neer City, Goble, Reuben, and Mayger; and, in Clatsop County, the towns of Blind Slough, Wauna, and Bradwood.

could afford to spend more than \$4 million a year for street improvements. In addition, the city was planning new bridges as well as raising funds for a municipal auditorium and a public library. Overall, Portland was looking flush.

At the same time, a typical resident in Columbia or Clatsop County worked on the family farm or spent backbreaking days in a lumber camp. Blue collar workers averaged two dollars a day while white collar workers might make as much as five. Many women rarely left their homes except to visit neighbors nearby. In addition, settlers in Columbia and Clatsop counties tended to cluster in ethnic German, Swiss, or Scandinavian communities.

As far as highways were concerned, the independent, clannish, rural towns along the Columbia resented any sort of "Big Brother" attitude, and expected any road project for which they were paying to cater to the needs of the communities through which it passed.

And as the lower Columbia River Valley found itself moving inexorably into the era of the automobile, its people united in a desire for better roads. That desire had begun decades

before with the Good Roads Movement, whose roots stretched back to a time before the first automobile hit the streets.

"I often hear nowadays [that] the automobile instigated good roads; that the automobile is the parent of good roads," wrote Horatio Earle, popularly known as the *Father of Good Roads*. "Well, the truth is, the bicycle is the father of the good roads movement in this country."

Early Transportation

Waterways

In the beginning, the waterways of America served as its highways. In northwest Oregon, the Columbia River was the east-west avenue of choice for early travelers. One reason is that the river lies at sea level, making travel possible year round, while higher routes through the Cascades in the winter months spelled disaster. Another is that by 1850, the presence of steamboats gave merchants and travelers a cost-effective alternative to the misery of wagon roads. The steamer *Lot Whitcomb*, launched Christmas day of 1850, signaled the beginning of operations for the Oregon Steam Navigation Company.

Steamboats on the lower Columbia "wooded-up" twice daily, buying from local townships and settlers willing to cut and make cords available at riverside. The first cities in Oregon were built along the water to avail themselves of commerce, shipping, and travel opportunities.



The *Lot Whitcomb* on the Willamette River

In May of 1880, bicycling enthusiasts met in Newport, Rhode Island to form the League of American Wheelmen (LAW) as a way to secure the rights of cyclists, foster camaraderie, and agitate for better roads. “Wheelman” was a popular term for the early bicyclist and his mount was often referred to as his “wheel.”

LAW quickly went national. Its magazine, *Good Roads*, boasted a million subscribers within the first three years. Oregon held its first Good Roads convention in 1896; a year later, fourteen bicycle shops in downtown Portland advertised in the *Oregon Bicycle Guide*, published by the Oregon Chapter of LAW. Meanwhile, songs and plays extolled the bicycle, which not only became a favored mode of transportation, but also provided recreational and “trysting” opportunities in the open air.

Cyclists may have been the first organized group to lobby successfully on behalf of good roads, but with the growing popularity of the automobile in the last decades of the nineteenth century, interest in the bicycle began to wane, and other groups took the lead. For example, the National League of Good Roads, an organization devoted exclusively to road improvement, organized in 1892. Shortly thereafter, the Department of Agriculture’s Office of Road Inquiry—the predecessor of the Federal Highway Administration—began promoting good roads by gathering, sorting, and distributing information on road laws and construction.

In Oregon, and particularly in Portland and Salem, the Good Roads Movement attracted wealthy and prominent supporters. Even in rural communities, a candidate for office couldn’t afford to ignore the topic because almost everyone supported the concept, though that support varied as to who should control the road-building and who should benefit from it.



Portland and its surrounding communities had a great number of surfaced roads, good railroad service and, eventually, an extensive trolley system. But moving goods into Portland involved lengthy and difficult trips over hills and along steep grades. City and market roads in Columbia and Clatsop counties were abysmal, and many rural communities saw improving their local roads as critical to their futures.

Early statewide efforts were focused upon locating, funding, and constructing highways along the coast, through the Willamette Valley and, especially, along the Columbia River. There were obvious benefits to making the Columbia the first choice: The river route cut through the Cascades at an elevation that was low enough to make it passable throughout the year; the route would connect the eastern part of the state with Portland; and the Pacific and the spectacular scenery—particularly in the gorge—would attract



tourists. Therefore, the time was ripe for the Good Roads forces to take the wheel and try to drive three disparate counties—Multnomah, Columbia, and Clatsop—towards a common goal.

But even with the cry for good roads ringing throughout Oregon during the first years of the twentieth century, for the most part it was a disorganized wail being addressed in piecemeal ways. On the north side of the Columbia River, however, the state of Washington already had a champion—Samuel C. Hill, who would later play a crucial and prominent role in Oregon’s road-building history, especially along the Columbia River.

An avid good-roads advocate, Hill was an attorney who was related through business and marriage to James J. Hill, the railroad tycoon. Before moving to Seattle in 1889, Hill had served as president of eleven different railways and had been director of seven more. Inexplicably, he left James J. Hill’s employment in 1900 after fourteen years.

“Sam...was charming,” recalled Frank Branch Riley, a long-time Portlander and raconteur who knew Hill well, “filled with enthusiasm, the complete extrovert. He was blessed with a vanity that was captivating [and possessed] a tremendous flair for the dramatic and spectacular.”

If his vanity and self-esteem were bruised by his dismissal from railroad service, Hill moved quickly to restore them over the next thirty years, trading successfully in the stock market and winning admiration through his associations with famous folk, his investments in public service, and his success in business.

In 1904, when good-roads enthusiasts from King County met in Seattle, Hill and four others formed a committee to study the road laws of other states. The next year, two important things happened. The first of these was that Washington’s legislature established a state highway board appointed by the governor and consisting of three members.

Strange as it may seem today, no standards relating to the construction of roads or bridges existed in America at the time. Unlike Europe, where road construction and maintenance was supported by national and local government, American communities and towns—and sometimes even individuals—negotiated personally with contractors and were often taken advantage of. As a result, various states across the country began establishing highway commissions to oversee the planning of and the bidding on new roadways, as well as to devise guidelines for their construction. Washington was the fourteenth state to form such a commission.



Samuel C. Hill



Samuel C. Lancaster



First ad for an Oregon auto show, 1909

The second event of importance occurred when U.S. Secretary of Agriculture James Wilson introduced Hill to one of his engineers, Samuel Lancaster, a man who was to play a pivotal role in the construction of the Columbia River Highway.

Three years later in 1908, when asked to address the highway committee hearings in Olympia, Hill introduced Lancaster, and soon thereafter—in typical flamboyant style—handed the engineer a check for \$500 and invited him to bring his entire family to visit the Hill residence in Seattle. When James Wilson balked at permitting his talented engineer to spend more than six months in one state, Hill persuaded Lancaster to quit his federal government job and go to work for the state of Washington.

The same year, Hill, in the company of Lancaster and bridge engineer Charles Purcell, traveled to Europe to inspect roads. While there, Hill, in his capacity as the president of the Washington State Good Roads Association, served as a delegate to the First International Road Congress in Paris. After returning home, he promoted the paving of streets and boulevards, using the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific

Exposition in Seattle as a venue for the First American Congress of Road Builders. A custom-built structure at the exposition featured displays of road-building technology and served as the site of the meeting.

With Sam as its president, the Washington State Good Roads Association was responsible for passing ten good-roads laws. “We didn’t know,” said Seattle farmer W.P. Perrigo, “but what we had good roads until Sam Hill came.”

Washington officials, however, seemed less appreciative. “Outside of a few personal friends,” Hill said, “no one in the city of Seattle has shown any interest.”

In 1911, the Washington legislature increased its state highway commission from three to five members, putting the governor and his cronies in control. When Governor Marion E. Hay thwarted Hill’s plans to use convict labor to build roads, he came to regret it, as Hill successfully lobbied for the election of Hay’s opponent, Ernest Lister, in 1912. Lister agreed to support Hill’s pet construction project of a highway on the Columbia’s north bank, but then developed cold feet when construction costs topped \$30,000 a mile.

This was the last straw. Sam Hill’s patience with Washington politics was at an end—while his role in Oregon was about to begin.



Sam Hill (front row, fourth from left) with the first American Congress of Road Builders, Seattle, 1909

Early Transportation

Railroads

On a national level, the subject of steam railroads won public interest slowly. "To travel at a speed of fifteen or twenty miles an hour is a sinful deviation from the Lord's plan for mankind," one man said at the first appearance of the iron horse: "It will set the whole world agadding...grave, plodding citizens will be flying about like comets."

By the end of the Civil War, opinions had changed, especially in the West. "The railways are the true roads of America," wrote a witness to the process. "They have made the towns, and the towns turn to them in grateful acknowledgment, not banishing them to the back regions, but receiving them into their very midst." The communities along the lower Columbia pined mightily for the railroad. By the 1880s, Portland and St. Helens had welcomed the rail, but cities farther west were still isolated. When Goble finally got a line from Portland in 1890, it happened because the connection was of benefit to both cities.

A ferry, which had been built in Portland from pieces cut in New York and shipped around the horn, took trains across the Columbia River from Washington (at Kalama) to Oregon (near Goble) as easily and as safely as possible. Even so, passengers had their doubts. "Our train went to Goble and on to a ferry boat to cross the Columbia River," said an 1899 traveler. "It was thrilling to me to see the big boat settle down in the water with the weight of the cars, and I thought we would sink."

This ride was tame compared to those in 1894 when the Columbia River flooded. Because Kalama and Goble were underwater, Oregon-bound cars had to be taken onto the *Tacoma* in Kelso and ferried all the way down the swollen river to Portland.



The sidewheel train ferry Tacoma

In 1898, after years of negotiation, Astoria finally completed a railroad line connecting the coast with Goble, St. Helens, and Portland.

Goble's role as a rail transit hub lasted only twenty-five years. In 1908, railroad magnate and "empire builder" James J. Hill finally bridged the Columbia River between Portland and Vancouver. This connected Portland to the Midwest and East by way of a north-bank, water-level railroad through Spokane, known as the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway.

Just as the presence of water dictated the situation of the Columbia River's early towns, the building of the railroad caused them to reevaluate their locations. Because a town close to the rail line had numerous commercial advantages, some older communities moved while new ones were established. One exception was St. Helens, the Columbia County seat, which the railroad bypassed. It couldn't move its city center several miles southeast and away from the waterfront, so the town of Houlton became known as West St. Helens.

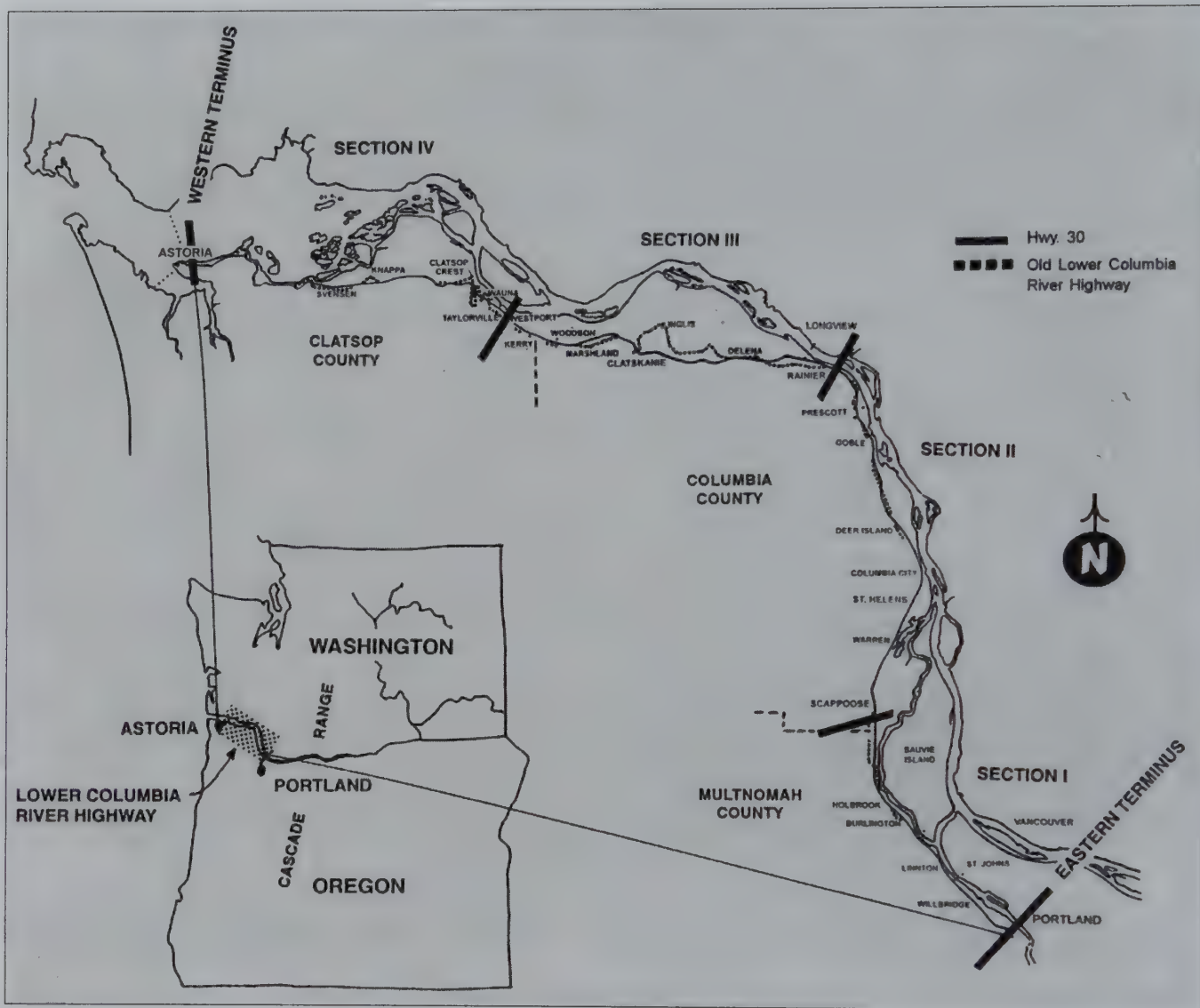
History was to repeat itself twenty-five years later when the State Highway Engineer selected a route for the Lower Columbia River Highway that, once again, snubbed downtown St. Helens. This time, the natives were decidedly restless.

Because railroads were the first transportation corridors to be established on land, they tended to take the straightest lines and the best grades, and their presence created frustrating challenges for the road builders who followed; railroads would not compromise and were seldom willing to relocate.

With a useful railroad network in place, city families began to use the railroads to escape what was perceived of as the civilized life to make the acquaintance of the nature they'd known only through books. The drawback was that nature could only be appreciated in passing. There was no way to stop the train whenever one wanted to explore the enticing sights that slipped by at speed. The coming of the automobile promised to change all that.



First train from Astoria to Portland, 1898



The four sections of the Lower Columbia River Highway: Portland to Astoria

Keeping Together

Coming together is the beginning.

Keeping together is progress.

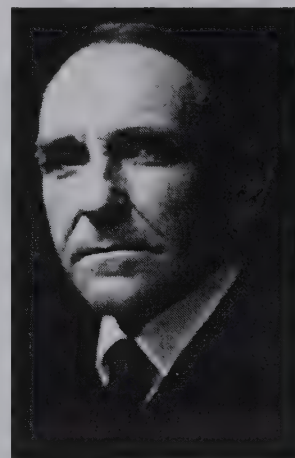
Working together is success.

— Henry Ford

If early efforts to build a good road along the Columbia River could be considered “stalled,” then Sam Hill must be considered the mechanic whose tireless work and force of will “jump-started” the project. After Governor Lister and the Washington Legislature balked at paying for a Columbia River highway in that state, Hill, with scarcely a pause, once again swept off to Europe for a month to view roads. After returning to the United States, he began to apply his considerable powers of persuasion to the project of constructing a south-bank highway on the Oregon side of the Columbia River. (One of Hill’s businesses was a Portland-based telephone and telegraph company, so he had always made an effort to remain abreast of Oregon politics.) Almost immediately, he found a powerful ally in Oregon’s governor, Oswald West.

“Listen, brother, you don’t have to waste your breath on me,” West told him when Hill came to call after his rejection in Washington. “I am a hundred percent for your good-roads program... You know little about the people of this state, but I know a lot. They are fine, but damned peculiar. One often is obliged to resort to strategy in order to induce them to do the things that are really in their best interest.”

Sam Hill thought long and hard, studied routes, topography, and the population to be served, and quickly realized that the two logical places to begin lobbying hardest were on each end of the proposed route. Astorians were already strong supporters, and the businessmen of Portland—many of whom were members of the Arlington Club, to which Hill belonged—wielded considerable power and influence in Multnomah County.

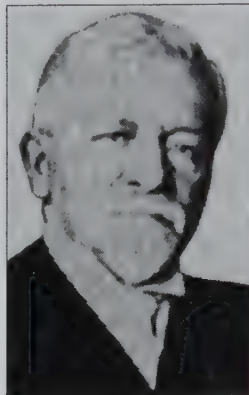


Gov. Oswald West

One of Hill's first converts in Portland was millionaire Simon Benson, whose support would become crucial to the highway's success. Local newspaper magnates Henry L. Pittock of *The Oregonian* and C.S. "Sam" Jackson of the *Oregon Journal* also added their clout.

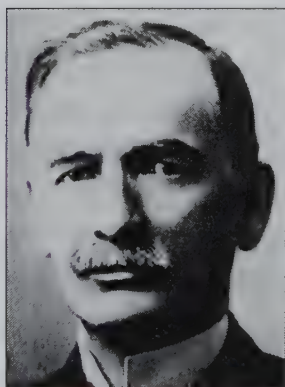


Simon Benson



Henry Pittock

Another early backer was lawyer Julius L. Meier, who in 1911, *The Oregonian* reported, "called the first meetings, interviewed the river district men and got a complete outline of the road situation."



C.S. Samuel Jackson



Julius L. Meier

The situation began changing at the beginning of 1912. Even though Multnomah County was already well-organized and well-funded for road building, Columbia County had spent \$875,000 over ten years in unsuccessful attempts to keep its roads in passable

condition. Therefore, good-roads enthusiasts knew that, with its greater demands and recalcitrant farmers, Columbia County was going to be a "harder sell."

On a late January evening in 1912, Columbia County residents gathered in Clatskanie to hear local good-roads supporters Robert A. Yount of Rainier, president of the Columbia County Good Roads Association, and school principal J.R. Collins discuss the importance of the bond issue. Also present with his speech and lantern slides was Sam Hill, accompanied by three Seattle farmers representing rural residents who had benefited by good roads in their state.

"Gentlemen, before Mr. Hill begins to speak, I want to impress upon all of you here to bring the ladies out tonight," said W.A. Hall, introducing Sam Hill. "It is a clean performance from beginning to end, and we want every man to have his wife beside him. The women should be good-roads enthusiasts; men get out some way or another, but woman is the stay-at-home. I think if you give the woman a good fair chance, she will vote for good roads."

The choreography of this meeting was typical of Sam Hill and Oswald West: They brought in local personalities to present and, ostensibly, to control the meeting in their own county. Furthermore, Hill presented as honored guests one or two state representatives as well as visiting dignitaries who spoke glowingly of the results of good roads in their areas. The presence of these "outside" visitors was designed to provoke competitive county instincts—and it worked.

"We are the only gap in the Columbia Highway [its original name] from Hood River to the ocean," Rainier's Robert Yount said at the meeting. "Clatsop County on one side...and Multnomah County on the other

Portland Plan

In October of 1912, municipal architect Edward H. Bennett presented his preliminary report for the Greater Portland Plan as a guide for further development. "The plan for Portland," he wrote, "results from the powerful impulse of a certainty of growth that would be a calamity were not preparation made for it."

Bennett envisioned Portland as an "organic city" whose business center was its heart; its parks, breathing spaces or lungs; and its boulevards and rivers, its circulatory system or arteries. As a result, he emphasized maintaining woods and parks, studying the designs of famous boulevards and highways of major cities, and building bridges to span the Willamette River.

In the year Bennett presented his plan, Portland had 223 miles of hard-surfaced streets and 334 miles of other improved streets in place. Portlanders could easily go to a show or the zoo, visit the park or attend a lecture or concert. It was by far the most affluent city in the region.

side of us are preparing this highway. Now then, if the state goes ahead and levies an assessment and sets aside a certain fund for the purpose of hard surfacing and maintaining these roads; if we get in and build our road, like we are asked to do, we will get our share of it. If we don't do it, we will build our own roads, and we will help the other fellow pay for his. Now boys, that's what it is going to be as sure as you are alive."

Officially, at least, Columbia County jumped aboard the good-roads bandwagon, with its county court and the Good Roads Committee promoting a bond measure for \$360,000 that would build permanent roads. "We have nothing to lose," said the court and the committee, "and everything to gain."

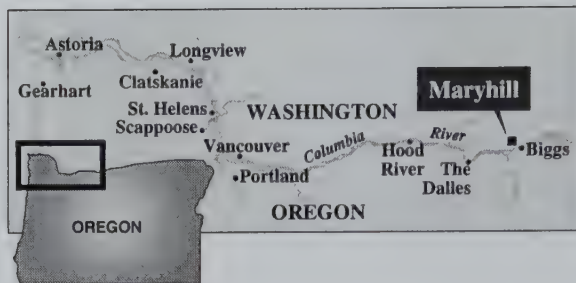
Even though Columbia County didn't want to be the monkey wrench in the gears of progress, another very real fear could not be whistled away by the good-roads folks. Farmers, especially those living in communities some distance from the river, equated the building of better roads with a rise in taxes. Roads extolled as scenic wonders would not necessarily get their crops to market, and they resented the idea that they might be paying for a project

that would benefit Portland day-trippers. Thus, from the very beginning, good-roads speakers were careful to include potential benefits to farmers and rural dwellers.

Leaving no source of support untapped, Hill and others made personal pitches to the women and children of the three-county area during promotional visits to support the bond measures. Many meetings later, Meier concluded that enough support existed to justify the construction of a highway from the sea to Portland. He then arranged an initial meeting on Labor Day of 1912 at Gearhart, and immediately issued invitations to some of the most influential businessmen in Multnomah, Washington, Columbia, and Clatsop counties.

Excitement for the Gearhart meeting ran so high that Rainier decided to charter a special Pullman rail car to take sixty good-roads boosters to the meeting. This was simple self-preservation; citizens of Rainier desperately wanted the new road to pass through their community. Other cities did the same.

The meeting saw the formation of the Columbia Highway Association, with Julius Meier serving as president. In addition, Sam Hill presented his good-roads lecture and slide



show, which must have been so familiar to Hill that he could have done it in his sleep, for he had already delivered the presentation to twenty thousand Portland school children.

In February of the following year, in a grandiose bid to turn the heads of Oregon's lawmakers, Sam Hill arranged for a special train to bring the entire legislature to Maryhill, his country estate on the Washington side of the Columbia River. Here Hill had built several miles of paved road that he had paid for himself—all \$120,000 of it. After eating a "sumptuous luncheon" and listening to Hill's lecture on road building, the visiting legislators voted to create the State Highway Commission, making Oregon the last of the Pacific coast states to do so. Its three members were Governor Oswald West, Secretary of State Ben W. Olcott, and State Treasurer Thomas B. Kay. Things soon began moving swiftly.



Driving one of Sam Hill's test roads at Maryhill, probably during state legislature's visit in February, 1913

Particularly important was that Oswald West appointed Henry Bowlby, Washington's former State Highway Engineer, to the same position in Oregon. Bowlby came to the job with a wealth of experience. A former



Henry L. Bowlby, 1922

West Point cadet, Bowlby had two college degrees, including one in civil engineering, from the University of Nebraska. At the age of twenty-two, he had traveled to South America, where he was engaged in railroad engineering, then returned home and taught civil engineering at the University of Washington in Seattle. Later, as the state engineer and a member of Sam Hill's road building retinue, he was partly responsible for locating 735 miles of roads in Washington and seeing 140



Henry Bowlby and Sam Hill at Maryhill

First Automobiles

When automobiles first made their noisy, unreliable appearance, horses (and their drivers) were driven to distraction. The best that could be said for the growing presence of cars was that—judging by the mayor's message and the municipal reports for Portland of 1911—it would soon be possible to redirect the \$10,000 a year the city spent on shoveling horse manure. When E. Henry Wemme brought the first horseless carriage—a Locomobile Steamer—to Portland in 1900, the machine was still considered a rich man's toy.

"When it arrived at Mr. Wemme's store, at Front and Burnside Streets, several of his store employees uncrated it and put it together and then attempted to get up steam," reported William Gill. "Well, they filled 'er up with water and gasoline and tried to light the burner, when all of a sudden a fire started under the auto and everybody, myself included, started for the tall timber, and just about the time I went around the corner she went bang!...the fire was put out and the little auto was standing there on the sidewalk somewhat singed...but still in the ring."

What was once a novelty quickly began to catch the public's fancy. In 1907, when Oregon first imposed a license fee on motor vehicles, 236 of them were registered for a total of \$708 in fees. But car ownership began to grow exponentially, and by 1911 Portland's mayor reported that the city's streets were graded, oiled, partly-paved and received attention from a street-cleaning crew twice a day. By 1912, Portland boasted 222.78 miles of hard-surface, about 50 per cent of its total roadway. By 1914, Multnomah County had about 40 percent of the cars in the state.

"Are we auto mad?" a citizen of St. Helens asked in a letter appearing in the *St. Helens Mist*. It appeared that many were. And they were mad in a different way about roads.

Automobiles needed better roads, especially when heavy trucks began pounding over the lightly-graded surfaces planned for horses and wagons. People behind the wheel of an exciting new automobile were ready to take on the world, but they soon discovered that there was not much of anywhere they could go without getting into trouble.

Roads in Columbia and Clatsop counties were regularly made impassable by flooding, frequently blocked by fallen trees and slide debris, and in constant need of dragging and replanking. Even planked roads, considered a remarkable improvement over corduroy or dirt, could be dangerously slippery in rain. During the winter months, denizens of the area didn't even bother to try using some of the more difficult routes, waiting for the skies to clear and surfaces to dry. Even so, change occurred slowly.

"If there is anyone who contends that public roads in this state are good," Judge Webster asserted, "he confesses either such a dense ignorance of what good roads are or such a hopeless lack of acquaintance with the state that it is useless to attempt to enlighten him."



E. Henry Wemme at the wheel of the first car in Oregon

Oswald West

(1877-1960)

Ontario, Canada-born Oswald West came to Oregon in 1877 at the age of four. He attended Portland and Salem schools, and went to work at age fifteen. After taking the post of State Land Agent in 1903 and bringing numerous companies to justice for fraudulent land sales, he was appointed Railway Commissioner in 1907. Three years later, he ran as a Democrat for governor.

A progressive of rare conviction and tenacity, West campaigned for direct participation of the public in government through a referendum and initiative system, campaigned for the preservation of public park land, and backed the creation of a state system of good roads. Under his administration, women in Oregon gained the right to vote in November of 1912. At West's request, seventy-eight-year-old Abigail Scott Duniway penned the Equal Suffrage Proclamation that ushered in this constitutional change. (Although Oregon was not the first state to accord women the right to vote, it was still in the vanguard; the United States did not ratify the nineteenth amendment until 1920.)

Concerned with the trend toward the private exploitation of resources, West pushed a bill through the 1913 legislature that declared most of Oregon's beaches to be public highways. Preserving Oregon's beaches for the enjoyment of the general public was unprecedented in this country and the envy of many other states. Following a popular but controversial term in office, West decided not to run for re-election, choosing to practice law, function as a consultant, and write newspaper columns in Portland from 1915 until his death in 1960. "Perhaps no one in the state's history," noted *The Oregonian*, "leaves a more lasting impression on it than West."

Today, Oswald West State Park on the Oregon coast stands as a beautiful and lasting memorial to this fearless and innovative governor.



Governor Oswald West with Abigail Scott Duniway (seated) as she signs the Equal Suffrage Proclamation, giving Oregon women the right to vote. Standing nearby is Dr. Viola M. Coe, acting president of the Oregon State Equal Suffrage League.

*Yours Truly,
Oswald West*

actually constructed. Before his move to Oregon, he had also maintained a consulting highway engineering business in Seattle.

Governor West was also exerting steady pressure on members of the legislature. He had set up a "harmony committee," whose members pledged \$500 each toward promoting bills for state road bonds, and introduced legislative measures to use convict labor for road construction. Meanwhile, quick thinking often short-circuited the disruptive tactics used by the anti-road forces in Multnomah County.

"One day we were going to hold a meeting advocating good roads in the public library in Portland," Sam Hill explained about one such incident. "We got word that a lot of objectors were coming to try and break up the meeting. [Charles B. Chamberlain, editor of the *Bellingham Reveille* and a supporter of good roads] told me not to worry about it—that the meeting would be held, and there would be an enthusiastic audience. When I and the other speakers arrived, the hall was packed, and there wasn't room for another person in it. There were scores of husky looking men outside the library. We had a very successful meeting, and the resolutions for good roads were passed unanimously, and the papers played up the enthusiasm of the public for the good-roads program. I asked Charley how he had done it. He said, 'I sent a big bunch of railroad men to go there an hour early and occupy all the seats, so when the objectors came they couldn't even find standing room.'"

In late July of 1913, the Multnomah Board of County Commissioners appointed an advisory committee to consider matters connected with modern road building. In early September, the board turned over to the new State Highway Department all engineering connected with the Columbia Highway in that

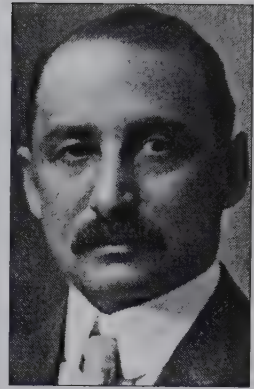
county, and set aside \$75,000 for the purpose. At the end of the same month, the Highway Commission resolved that the State Highway Engineer, Major Henry Bowlby, be directed to aid the commissioners in the preliminary work outlined, while Samuel

Lancaster was appointed Assistant Highway Engineer in charge of the highway in Multnomah County, and John Yeon was named Roadmaster.

The surveying, grading, and building of the highway soon began, its design and construction following the most advanced engineering standards. Throughout the route, with few exceptions, locating engineers would hold fast to a design protocol originally developed by Samuel C. Lancaster, predicated on his many years of practical experience. It included no grade greater than five percent, and no curve with less than a two hundred-foot turning radius. (This presented enormous challenges at Clatsop Crest, necessitating the construction of the Bugby Loops approach to the south.)

Other ideas for the highway's innovative design came from experiments made in other states as well as from those conducted by Sam Hill, who spent \$125,000 of his own money to demonstrate, in part, that blacktop was the road surface of the future. The Maryhill loops on his estate, for example, incorporated seven separate paving methods chosen for their durability. (Hill began these road experiments long before he fell out of favor in Washington state.)

Furthermore, because wet weather conditions in the Northwest demanded proper drainage, the Maryhill experiments involved the use of crowning—grading so that the surface of the



John B. Yeon

road crests in the center and slopes to the sides. Also part of the design for carrying run-off from the road were drains, curbs, and gutters, and the highway represented one of the earliest rural uses of each. Pipe culverts that allowed cross drainage, drop inlets acting as catch basins to direct runoff, and box culverts to cross small creeks and permit cattle to cross under the highway safely were also in the plans. The highway's design even included the use of prototype masonry walls and guard rocks.

Although such features are standard today, the concepts were in their infancy in the early part of the twentieth century, and some practices have changed through the years. For example, today's engineers use super-elevation—sloping the road towards the inside of the curve—so that motorists needn't slow down on that curve, but

Columbia River Highway designers resisted the practice, using it only for drainage.

“Any curve necessitating a super-elevation is dangerous and speed should be slackened,” one engineer wrote, “and in any case should be enough to prevent side-lash to passengers in a machine at 25 miles an hour...the general rule should be nearer a speed of 15 miles per hour.”

Surveyors and engineers also followed Lancaster's lead in aesthetic matters, balancing practicality and the desire for accessibility with a respect for natural beauty. And while the lower half of the road cannot compete with the myriad of waterfalls and river views in the upper half, every effort was made to incorporate significant natural features.

In building the highway, workers graded the surface, situated drains and culverts, laid a sub-base of rock or gravel, and then installed an



Horse-drawn scraper used for road construction



Grading the highway: rock wall below roadbed and ore cart to carry out blasted rock

“impervious wearing surface” such as Warrenite, one of a number of commercial names for a form of asphalt paving. With so many steps involved, one contractor rarely handled the entire process.

Once the highway’s road bed was completed, a wooden post-and-rail guardrail, treated with one heavy coat of white paint—consisting of lead and zinc oxide in proportions of 3–1 and mixed with raw linseed oil and turpentine drier—would eventually flank much of the entire highway.

“This type [of railing] was first used on the Columbia River Highway in places where a particularly substantial and artistic design was desired,” reported the U.S. Department of Agriculture Department of Public Roads, “and one that would be less expensive than the stone fence constructed along parts of the highway.”

When work began in 1913, mileposts were plotted along the entire length of the highway.

Historic Mile Post 0.0 was set at the intersection of SW Washington Street and SW Broadway in downtown Portland. From there, two separate sets of markers were established: one heading east toward Hood River and The Dalles (today’s Historic Columbia River Highway) and the other heading west to Astoria (the Lower Columbia River Highway).

Completing the highway, however, depended on the financial support of the counties through which it passed. Not surprisingly, Clatsop County was one of the first to take advantage of the new County Bonding Act. In November 1913, it approved a bond issue of \$400,000, and Lyman Griswold was appointed Assistant Highway Engineer in charge of the highway from Astoria to Westport. Fortune favored the venture, and the following March *The Oregonian* reported that the bonds had been sold with \$10,331 in interest.

Meanwhile, Columbia County good-roads enthusiasts who had worked hard to pass their bond measures eventually saw their efforts pay off: In February 1914, the road bond election carried with sixty-two percent of the vote.

“By a vote of 1,896 to 1,162,” reported the *St. Helens Mist*, the people of Columbia

County said...that the county would issue its bonds in the sum of \$360,000 for the purpose of building permanent roads. The election was a quiet one but one in which a great deal of interest was taken.”

Yet getting the go-ahead to proceed with the Columbia Highway did not mean clear sailing.

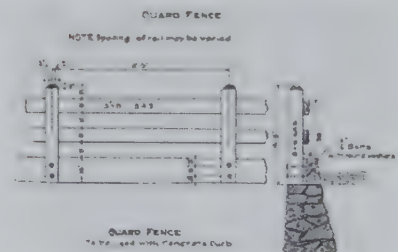


Road crew working on the Columbia River Highway

Guard Fences

The original guard rails—or guard *fences*—along the Columbia River Highway were installed in 1915. They consisted of two 3x8-inch timber rails, surfaced on four sides and spiked or drift-bolted to the posts. Initial bid prices ranged from sixty cents to one dollar per linear foot. Throughout the years, other styles of railings were introduced. They include the standard guard fence (1915), post and cable (1930s), the “C” Rail (1930 and ’40s) and the “W” rail (1940s and ’50s).

The State Highway Department also used a standard arched masonry rail throughout the Columbia River Highway. There were variations to its design—most memorably seen near Crown Point and at Multnomah Falls on the upper highway—but they all consisted of slip-form mortared walls of random rubble with arched drainage openings and a concrete cap. Masonry railings were more expensive than other styles, but the maintenance costs were very low. The condition of these railings in the abandoned Prescott Point section of the lower highway is still remarkable, given their age and the many years of neglect.



Samuel C. Lancaster

(1864-1941)

In 1906, when Sam Hill brought Samuel Lancaster to the Pacific Northwest, the latter had already established a reputation as one of the country's expert road builders. As city engineer of Jackson, Tennessee in 1889, he oversaw the design and construction of a half-million dollar model system of hard-surfaced roads. This work brought him to the attention of U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, James Wilson who, in 1904, appointed him to a position as consulting engineer with the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads. Thus, Lancaster was preaching the gospel of good roads long before Hill and the Columbia River Highway entered his life. But when it did, Lancaster, a railroad and highway engineer of great sensitivity, swore that the highway would enhance and not damage its surroundings.

"When I made my preliminary survey here and found myself standing waist-deep in the ferns," he said, "I remembered my mother's long-ago warning: 'Oh, Samuel, do be careful of my Boston fern!' And I then pledged myself that none of this wild beauty should be marred where it could be prevented."

Stories relating how Lancaster and his men, "dangled like spiders as they let themselves down, hand over hand," over cliffs demonstrate the courage and physical prowess mustered by this inventive engineer on a day-to-day basis.

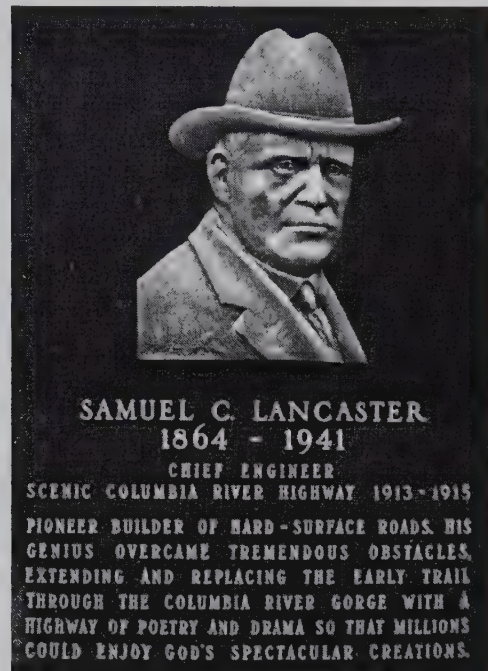
Lancaster directed the construction of the Columbia River Highway from August 1913 through April 1915 and to the Multnomah County line. He also acted as consultant in the creation of the Mitchell Point Tunnel and set the standards for grade, width, and location throughout the entire project. But in 1915, mere months before the dedication of the road, Lancaster resigned as a result of arguments with Multnomah County. The remainder of the work was completed according to his specifications, but without his help.

Lancaster continued to promote the highway and good roads in general throughout his life. A prolific writer, he completed four books and acted as engineer for projects in Utah and Delaware. He is also responsible for the scenic highway along the north rim of the Grand Canyon in Arizona.

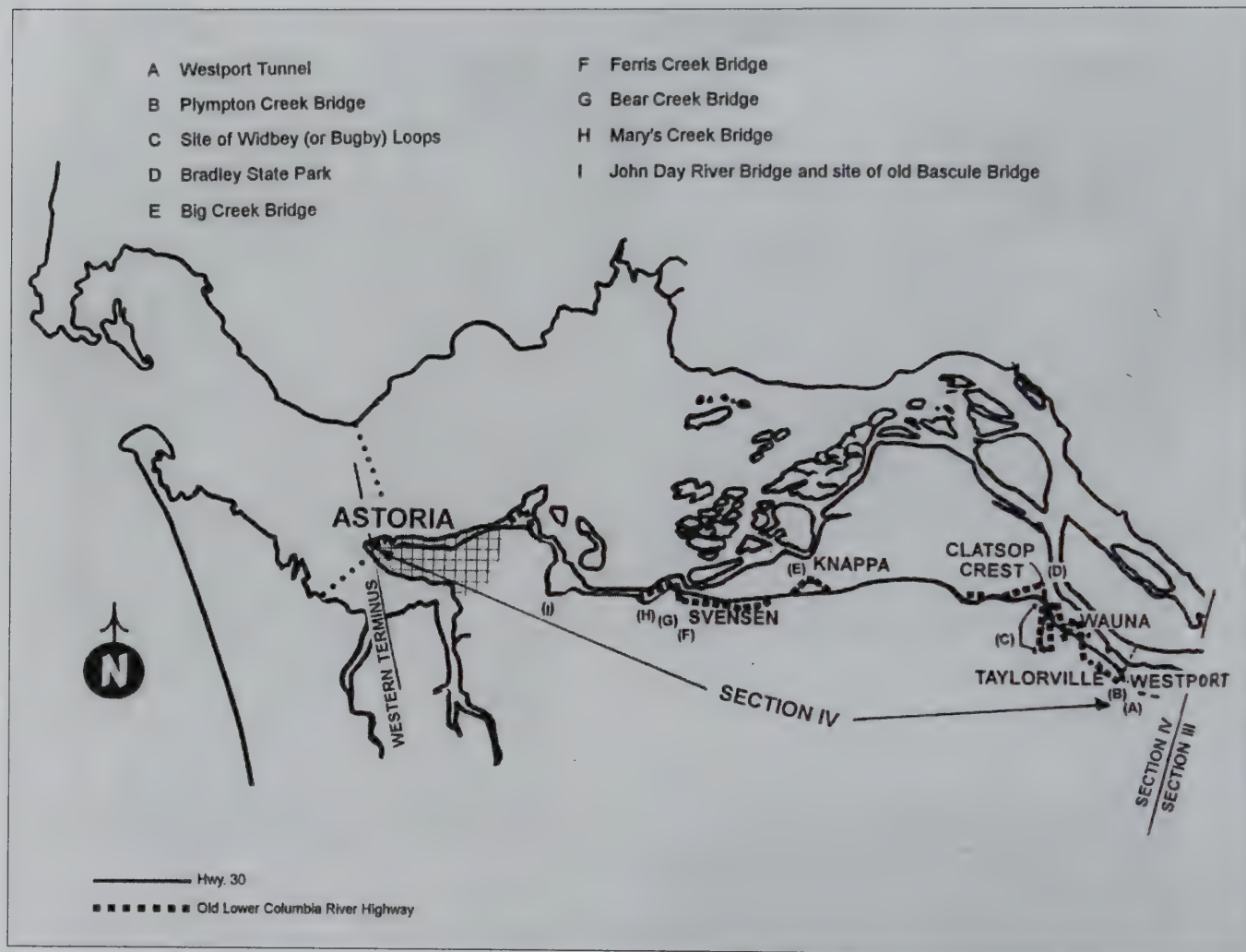
As cars got faster and more numerous, as commercial traffic grew and the highway began to deteriorate, Lancaster was forced to acknowledge that alterations were necessary. He continued to insist upon the importance of maintaining the Columbia River Highway intact as a tourist attraction.

"Tired men and women with their little children," he wrote, "may here enjoy the beauty of nature's art gallery and recreate themselves."

In 1963 a commemorative plaque honoring Lancaster was dedicated and placed at Vista House in the Columbia Gorge, where it may be viewed today.



Samuel Lancaster's plaque at Vista House



Section IV of the Lower Columbia River Highway: Astoria to Westport

Striking a Blow

*Grant us the will to fashion as we feel,
Grant us the strength to labor as we know,
Grant us the purpose, ribbed and edged with steel,
To strike a blow.*

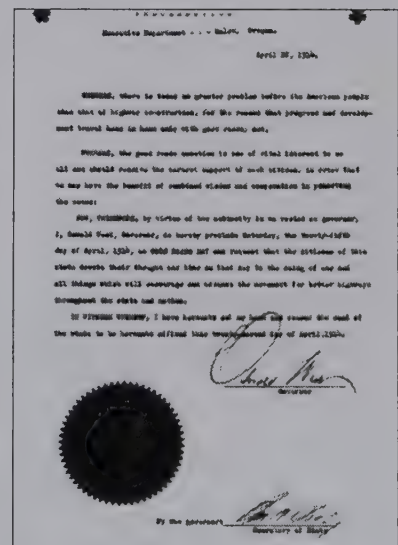
— John Drinkwater, “A Prayer”

The public stamp of approval for better highways—symbolized by Governor West’s announcement of the forthcoming Good Roads Day in April of 1914—didn’t hint at how difficult locating the highway and procuring the rights-of-way would be.

In early 1914, while campaigning for passage of the road bond issue in Columbia County, Assistant State Highway Engineer Lyman Griswold provoked hearty applause with his estimates of a speedy work schedule on the Columbia Highway.

“He detailed what was being done on the survey, the cost per mile and the apparent route,” reported *The Oregonian*. “He stated that if the bonds carried, the highway would be ready for traffic by the coming fall and would be sufficiently settled to be surfaced next season.”

Even though Multnomah County had already made a good start—the siting of the enormously popular Lewis & Clark Centennial Exposition on the marshland of Guild’s Lake in 1905 had necessitated the construction of good access roads from the city—the rosy picture painted by Griswold was not to be, for engineers in Clatsop and Columbia counties quickly found themselves facing two formidable obstacles: rugged terrain and local politics.



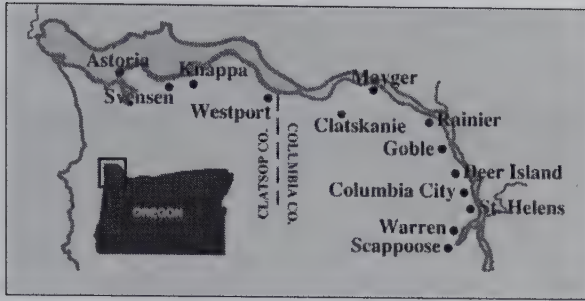
West’s Good Roads Day proclamation



Astoria, western end of the Columbia River Highway, 1918

Vintage view of highway drawbridge over Youngs River outside Astoria





Clatsop and Columbia County communities

In Clatsop County, it took approximately three months to cover the first fourteen miles. Miles three and four in the John Day River Valley lay in tideland with a ground elevation of only 7.5 feet above sea level. This area was subject to overflow by tide to a depth of 2.5 feet.



Highway along John Day River in Clatsop County, 1918

Even though the area between Svensen and Knappa was on a high, well-drained plateau, the stretch between Knappa and Westport proved particularly difficult, traversing much mountainous country, including the crest of the Coast Range at Bugby Mountain.

Beginning at Hunt Creek, at an elevation of 400 feet above sea level, the projected line climbed to Bugby Pass at an elevation gain of 750 feet per mile. District Engineer W.M. Peters knew it would be a challenge to ensure that grades did not exceed the planned five percent, and only the best station men (surveyors) were assigned to tackle the task.



Highway at Hunt Creek, 1918

The state's highway right-of-way agent moved to acquire property as soon as it had been identified. "The rule has been that one dollar is all the damage a man is entitled to," Henry Bowlby wrote in his first annual report in 1914, "when the State or the County asks permission to build for him a modern highway."



Bugby Loops under construction, 1915

Landowners initially accepted that ruling, with thirty-five owners in Clatsop County surrendering property for the highway without any compensation. When the county court moved to condemn the balance, fifty-five more deeds were acquired. The only property owners receiving compensation were two individuals with small lots who found themselves with almost no land after annexation, and six others who took their appeals to the circuit court. Even so, the county paid out only \$2,409 for twenty-eight miles of right-of-way—about \$86 per mile. But it was a different story in neighboring Columbia County.

In comparison to Clatsop County, Columbia County had more cleared land, wagon roads, towns, and residents with a personal interest in owning a piece of the highway while paying as little as possible for the privilege. To these folks, making use of existing roads made the most sense, regardless of whether these roads wound like snakes through the countryside and meandered across the tracks of the Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railroad. As a result, disagreements arose from the beginning between the Columbia County Court and the State Highway Commission about where certain parts of the road should pass.

The state did take pains to consider the use of existing roads, and clearly considered their use in many cases to be a political concession. "In many locations," observed Henry Bowlby, "[a] new location would have proved cheaper construction." Of the thirty-seven miles planned from Westport to Tide Creek in Columbia County, about twenty-three of them were to be built on virgin terrain.

Some compromises, however, could *not* be made. One example was the request that the highway pass through the established riverside town of Mayger. Assistant Highway Engineer Lyman Griswold explained that, although the survey had been authorized by the county court of Columbia County and all efforts had been made to oblige requests for siting, in the instance of Mayger, it just didn't make sense.

The state did not say that going through the Beaver Valley rather than curving far north through Mayger would cost less, though it did say that the Mayger route was "absolutely nonproductive" and "of no value to Columbia County" because it didn't offer the wealth of fertile land that would soon be accessible to settlers if the highway followed Beaver Creek.

As the state survey continued east through Deer Island on its way to the Columbia County-Multnomah County line, locating engineers J.A. Elliott and Frank Bryant found themselves making another unpopular recommendation. According to Griswold, "following the Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway track and remaining on the south and west side of it" was preferred to a meandering route that followed existing roads, crossing the tracks two miles east of Deer Island, continuing through Columbia City, running north of St. Helens and south to Warren, then crossing the tracks to the south at Scappoose, going under the railroad to the north, and finally making another rail grade crossing to the south before continuing to the Multnomah County line.

"A careful personal investigation convinced me that the first mentioned route was superior to the second in every respect," Griswold wrote, "and especially in terms of length, cost and safety to the traveling public."

This must have been an attempt at tact because the better route was glaringly obvious to a child—if that child didn't happen to live in Columbia City, St. Helens, or Warren.

The Columbia County Court was in a hard spot. "The citizens generally in this part of the county are favoring the building of the [new] road on the old road," the court said, "where practically all the grading and right of way are finished and secured."

The State Highway Department tried to sweeten the pot by promising to cover all surveying costs if the county agreed to approve the state's preferred route. As a result, a large delegation from Clatskanie and Rainier arrived to urge the court to accept the state's plan.

The court, however, couldn't make up its mind, so Assistant Engineer Griswold took the matter up with the county judge, John Harris.



Section III of the Lower Columbia River Highway: Westport to Rainier

“[I pointed] out to him,” Griswold reported, “the many advantages to be derived from locating the highway on one side of the track.”

The judge agreed and declared himself content that because the road would pass through Houlton, which expected to be annexed to St. Helens, the requirement that the highway pass through that city had been satisfied. But Griswold had no sooner left than the judge contacted locating engineer

Elliott and insisted that he relocate the line on the north side of the railroad tracks, following the old route through Columbia City and St. Helens.

When a befuddled Griswold returned three days later to find Elliott hard at work in following the county judge’s directions, Elliott explained that he had tried to telephone Griswold for approval, but that the judge had been adamant in insisting that, “since the work

was being done for Columbia County...he, the judge, would be the final authority to decide upon the route to be adopted.”

Griswold went immediately to the Columbia County courthouse and confronted the judge. After another long discussion about which route would best serve the state and a majority of the residents of Columbia County, the judge agreed to reserve his opinion until after the surveying process was completed. The unfortunate engineer Elliott obtained a leave of absence, and his partner Bryant completed the survey.

In April 1914, after almost six months of work, the state highway department completed its surveys for the Lower Columbia Highway, covering an area of forty-six miles consisting of what one journalist called “some of the heaviest standing timber in the Northwest.”

Soon after, State Highway Engineer Bowlby and Assistant Engineer Griswold appeared before the Columbia County Court, recommending that the first grading be done between Tide Creek and the Clatsop County line, excluding two difficult segments through Goble and just west of Rainier. The county agreed that work between Warren and Deer Island should be held up until more money became available, and a contractor was hired. In spite of the decision, within days the court was insisting that the state engineer hand over the plans for the first alternative line between Deer Island and Warren—the route following the old road through Columbia City and St. Helens.

“This was in violation of the agreement we had reached,” wrote Griswold, “and I so informed the Court, and again advised it to wait until we could know just how much money would be available after the work previously outlined had been done.”

The court would not budge, insisting that it had decided to build the road at once and wanted to advertise for bids. Another meeting on May 22 with the state highway engineer resulted in further deadlock as well as the nasty surprise that Columbia County had misrepresented the amount of money it had available to spend on roads. Instead of the reported \$355,000, the court asserted that there had never been more than \$315,000, and that the state would have to get along with that amount.

During this period, county residents living in the areas where work was to begin between Tide Creek and Clatskanie were becoming impatient. Why wasn’t the work proceeding as promised? In June of 1914, this condition of unrest resulted in yet another meeting in Clatskanie. More than six hundred citizens heard the court agree to place the \$315,000 at the disposal of the State Highway Department, and the state agreed that a small amount of the money would be used to repair and improve the road between Columbia City and Warren while work proceeded in the eastern part of the county.

Unfortunately, following the meeting, a jubilant Henry Bowlby issued a statement that included sentiments such as, “Every automobile owner in Portland is vitally interested in eliminating the needless hazard involved in crossing the railroad tracks.”

Residents of St. Helens, to whom a couple of railroad crossings spelled the difference between being either on the highway or eight miles away from it, didn’t like their needs equated with those of Portland’s pleasure-seekers. Neither did the county court nor the local newspaper.

The *St. Helens Mist* took aim with both barrels and let fly.

The state's planned route bypassing St. Helens, the newspaper said, was bad business "for the taxpayers of [St. Helens] when they pay one-third the taxes of the entire county, and get nothing in return except to build a road through the other districts, and then have the people of those other districts call us hogs, selfish, and unfair...when it comes to saying that our money shall be used to secure a right of way for a Portland road, and we be compelled to use the same road we have for years without any improvement after burdening ourselves with a large debt, it is a little more than we can stand."

Not surprisingly, Bowlby and Griswold soon found that the court was once again soliciting bids for work on the Columbia City-St. Helens alternative, in violation of their agreement with the state.

In spite of the actions of the court and the tone of the *St. Helens Mist's* editorials, not everyone in Columbia County was pleased with the antics of its elected officials. In August 1914, for example, residents of Houlton paid a Portland attorney to draw up petitions seeking to recall County Judge John Harris, Commissioners John Farr and Louis Fluhrer, and County Attorney Dillard.

When the county court gathered on August 15, it was met by a delegation of citizens from Clatskanie and Rainier that had arrived to demand more money for the road being constructed from Tide Creek to the Clatsop County line. A.L. Clark of Rainier reminded the court that it had promised to make \$315,000 available for use on the Columbia Highway, and that he had been informed the amount available had shrunk to \$260,000.



A 43-foot wall near Clatsop Crest, one of nine dry rubble masonry walls planned to hold the embankment and decrease excavation on Bugby Mountain, and the most extensive use of such a wall along the entire lower highway

Unless the promise was kept and the full \$315,000 tendered, Clark warned, the recall election would, “surely proceed and that it would carry a big majority.”

The court replied that it was using its best judgment in the expenditure of funds, and that if the people weren’t satisfied with it, they could go right ahead and conduct a recall.

By the end of August, the recall petitions had been filed, but county officials refused to resign. A month later, the judge, commissioners, and attorney were expelled by a vote of the people. Even so, Judge Harris refused to relinquish his position, and was consequently cited to appear in the Oregon Supreme Court to explain his actions.

While the political whirlwinds made chaos of highway progress in Columbia County, the Oregon State Highway Commission’s stalwart right-of-way agent, G.B. Richmond, continued to pursue his job, closely following the locating parties and obtaining deeds and promises of deeds for practically all the necessary rights-of-way. Because this right-of-way work in Clatsop County had been efficiently handled with the assistance of the Clatsop County judge, Richmond probably expected the same amicable rapport with Columbia County—but it was not to be.

“The right-of-way for the Columbia Highway in Columbia County was in the same condition as that of Clatsop County,” Richmond reported. “Much of it had been obtained free of cost to the county, yet there were those who felt they were damaged, and as the contractors were on the ground, ready to begin work, quick action to secure the

balance of the right of way became imperative. The county court of Columbia County, instead of instituting condemnation proceedings, as was done in Clatsop County Court, undertook themselves to assess damages to the various claimants and, in my judgment, they thus committed a grievous error, for they awarded damages to persons whose lands in many cases were either hilly, rough or uncleared and of little value, in the face of the fact that other parties had give the county free right of way over lands of much greater value.”

Assistant Highway Engineer Griswold confirmed Richmond’s impressions. After the right-of-way between the Clatsop County line and Rainier had been practically all pledged, he reported, “various people came to Mr. Richmond and myself and stated that the County Judge had promised certain people sums of money for their right-of-way, and a number who had promised the deeds then refused to give them for the reason that if their neighbors were to receive money for right of way, they too must be paid.”

A glance at the agent’s listings for damages awarded by the county confirms that more than a few people in Columbia County seem to have been grossly overpaid for their right-of-way lands when compared to landowners in neighboring Clatsop County.

With the survey complete, the right-of-way secured, and contractors jostling for position like hogs at the trough, the State Highway Commission must have felt ready to breathe a sigh of relief.

For State Highway Engineer Bowlby, however, the worst was yet to come.

Facing Problems

Public service is indeed a dangerous trade. It is a rough game, not for sensitive souls. The prudent, conservative, pedestrian soul who wants every course neatly plotted out and tested, every accident and emergency guarded against, every contingency covered, should keep religiously away from the permanent, unprotected public service, because it is fraught with danger to you and yours, full of the unpredictable and unpremeditated, the freakish, illogical, bone-chilling, narrow shaves, and the studious favors of Lady Luck.

– Robert Moses, *Public Works: A Dangerous Trade*

Even though State Engineer Henry Bowlby described the Pacific Northwest as, “a fertile ground for the growth of national highways,” locating and constructing a major scenic highway from Portland to Astoria seemed to bring out the best and the worst in everyone involved. While the new highway promised to open previously inaccessible areas to settlement and make it easier for communities to get their goods to market, at the same time it bypassed towns that deeply resented their exclusion from the main route of travel. Add to this the grumbling of contractors who had become accustomed to getting what they asked for, working directly with cities and counties and setting their own standards. The result was a recipe for friction.

One target for the wrath of those who felt thwarted by the road building process was Henry Bowlby himself, the personification of the State Highway Commission. Possessed of much of the gentle contempt and spirit of manifest destiny that Oswald West felt for the masses in Oregon, Bowlby was not as adept at concealing it.

“An immense territory with few existing roads,” Bowlby said of the region, “this is a paradise for a highway engineer, affording, as it does, an opportunity for him to put into practice the best there is in modern highway engineering.”



Henry Lee Bowlby

But some of those affected by the new highway had a different view. In December 1914, disgruntled residents of Columbia County, especially St. Helens and Scappoose, organized the Taxpayers League of Columbia County. Its objectives included reducing taxes and developing the resources of the county, but its first order of business involved Bowlby. The state engineer was guilty, the league insisted, of “gross incompetency and willful extravagance in handling highway affairs in this county.” A petition, they advised, was being prepared to ask the Highway Commission to fire him.

Beginning the same month, work on the highway was suspended for the next four months in Clatsop and Columbia counties because of short funds and bad weather. In more prosperous Multnomah County, however, road building continued uninterrupted. As a result, the other two counties attempted to enlist its help in lobbying the state legislature to raise a million dollars a year for two years for an additional road fund. At the eastern end of the upper highway, Hood River County was also facing financial difficulties with its segment of the road.

“Columbia and Hood River counties have bonded their limit,” the *St. Helens Mist* reported. “The former will need \$100,000 and the latter \$3,000 to complete the grading of the Columbia Highway through their counties...This fund must be provided by the state before the highway can be of much use to the city of Portland.”

To make matters worse, in January 1915 a dry rubble retaining wall that had been hastily constructed the previous summer near Clatskanie collapsed, dumping rock, dirt, trees, and stumps onto the railroad tracks below, covering them for a distance as far as two hundred feet and to a depth of four to eight feet.

The slide occurred on a portion of the highway built by the Consolidated Contract Company; the railroad had already filed a suit against the company in federal court to have this section of road removed as hazardous, but some highway dissidents still found reason to blame Bowlby.

“When this gigantic blunder is called to the attention of the Highway Engineer,” wrote the editor of the *St. Helens Mist*, “he will perhaps pass it off with a remark similar to the one made when he was accused of incompetency: that it was insignificant when compared to the magnitude of the work. So many of these proofs of incompetency and extravagance on the part of the Highway Engineer are coming to light each succeeding day that even Major Bowlby will have to take notice of some of them being significant, before long.”

In Clatsop County, the contracting company of Peterson and Johnson completed their work from Astoria to Westport, but then refused to settle for the approximately \$15,000 stipulated in their contract, instead demanding more than \$73,000, an increase of almost five times. They presented their claims in writing and named Bowlby in their complaint. The Consolidated Contract Company followed suit in Columbia County, demanding tens of thousands of dollars beyond their contracted price, as did contractors in Jackson and Hood River counties. In all cases, Bowlby firmly refused to pay more than the contracted amount and, as a result, found himself, along with the state, knee-deep in litigation.

The axe finally fell in February 1915. Governor James Withycombe—who had succeeded Oswald West just a month before—and State Treasurer Thomas B. Kay met with leaders of the state house and senate to discuss the numerous complaints as well as the results

Henry Lee Bowlby

(1879-1948)

The throwing of a biscuit in the mess hall at the West Point academy was a determining factor more or less in the career of Major H.L. Bowlby," wrote Fred Lockley in an *Oregon Journal* feature article introducing Oregon's first state highway engineer. The comment referred to an incident that occurred in 1901 during Henry Bowlby's senior year at the military academy. The biscuit-tossing infuriated West Point officials who severely disciplined the cadet officer in charge of the table. Fellow cadets demonstrated on his behalf. As a result, the five ringleaders, Bowlby among them, were expelled. President Theodore Roosevelt intervened to offer the five their commissions in the army, but they declined. Bowlby was not graduated from West Point and wasn't commissioned until the advent of the First World War, rising to the rank of major in 1917. Why he claimed that title during the years employed as State Highway Engineer in Washington and in Oregon is a mystery.

Born in Crete, Nebraska in 1879, he worked as a boy at his father's newspaper, *The Crete Democrat*. After having graduated from University of Nebraska with a degree in engineering in 1905, Bowlby moved to Seattle, teaching the same at the University of Washington until 1909. He became chief engineer of the Washington State Highway Department and was made the state's second State Highway Engineer in 1907, a position he held for four years. When Bowlby became Oregon's first State Highway Engineer in 1913, he stepped into a position with clearly delineated duties, serving a newly-created commission charged with establishing new statewide building standards. Contractors used to having their own way could not fool or bully Bowlby who insisted upon sticking to contracts and holding bidders to estimates for work. When frustrations erupted, contractors turned to the politicians with axes to grind and cut a deal, undercutting Bowlby's authority and resulting in his expulsion in 1915.

Bowlby went on to serve on the American Road Builders Association Board of Governors in 1916, and as a senior highway engineer for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1917. He entered the army in September of that year, serving as a bridge engineer in France and mustering out in 1918 as a lieutenant colonel. Following his two years of service in the Army, Bowlby became Chief, War Materials Division, U.S. Bureau of Public Roads and, in 1922, ARBA Chairman. In 1923 he was appointed to the position of chief engineer of the Long Island Park Commission and the Taconic Parkway Commission and served under Robert Moses. Moses accepted him on the strength of his work on the Columbia River Highway. Bowlby's later years were spent in private practice as Executive Vice President of Graham, Crowley & Associates of Chicago. He passed away in November of 1948 at the age of 69, nine months after the death of his wife Ivy, to whom he had been married since 1907. Among the many fraternal organizations to which Bowlby held a lifetime membership was Sigma Alpha Epsilon, and he lived by its creed: "The true gentleman is the man whose conduct proceeds from good will and an acute sense of propriety, and whose self-control is equal to all emergencies...who does not flatter wealth, cringe before power, or boast of his own possessions or achievements; who speaks with frankness but always with sincerity and sympathy; whose deed follows his word; who thinks of the rights and feelings of others, rather than his own; and who appears well in any company, a man with whom honor is sacred and virtue safe."



Henry L. Bowlby, 1948

Henry Bowlby's Firing

Oregon Journal
Portland, Oregon
June 2, 1915

An independent engineer, after an investigation, is in approximate agreement with Major Bowlby and his district engineers as to the balance due contractors on the road work in Clatsop County.

This engineer was sent out by engineer [E.I.] Cantine of the state highway department [Bowlby's successor]. He commends the location of the Clatsop County highway, commends the road work and in effect commends the Bowlby administration in Clatsop County. The findings of this engineer are approved by Mr. Cantine.

Thus the truth about the road work in Clatsop and Columbia counties is gradually coming to the surface. The claim of the Clatsop County contractors is for \$73,221. The balance held by Bowlby and his engineers to be due to contractors is about \$15,000. Though the findings of the independent engineer vindicate the Bowlby findings, Major Bowlby was removed from office because he guarded the public road fund, insisted that the specifications should be adhered to, and refused to pay the contractors the \$73,221 they demanded in Clatsop County.

The findings of his independent engineer illuminate many things. They explain why the contractors held the meeting in Senator Day's office in Portland to agree on a candidate for governor during the primaries.

They explain why Senator Day had the office of State Highway Engineer so changed that Bowlby would be ousted and another engineer appointed, a plan which failed, both by bungling the bill and in the selection of the new man.

They explain why Day's committee held a hearing at which charges were made against Bowlby by the contractors and their lawyers, but refused to grant a reply hearing for Bowlby.

They explain why Major Bowlby was asked by the governor and Treasurer Kay to resign with the explanation that Bowlby's presence in the office prevented the legislature from making generous road appropriations, an explanation that was not an explanation because after Bowlby's dismissal the legislature did not increase the road appropriation. They explain why the Hood River contractor wrote a Grants Pass friend saying of Bowlby: "There is a general revolt among the contractors engaged in this work, but we have the skid under him."

All the charges, all the shrieks, all the newspaper work, all of Day's road activities at the legislature, all the attacks in the state house against Bowlby were parts in the deliberate and comprehensive plan of Day to dislodge Bowlby and so arrange things that the contractors could get, not what the specifications called for, but great sums of money claimed outside the specifications.

It was all a colossal game, worked in many directions but with all the schemes coordinated, a game with the public road fund as the object and the ousting of Bowlby as a means of reaching that fund as the process.

It was one of the boldest and most audacious political schemes ever attempted in Oregon, and in the light of the fact that Major Bowlby was dismissed from office for refusing to give the contractors what they asked, it constitutes one of the greatest scandals in the political history of Oregon.

of a senate investigation into the matter. As a result of their meeting, they decided to abolish the office of State Highway Engineer, making that official a governor-appointed subordinate to the State Engineer. Soon after, the State Highway Commission called for the resignation of Henry Bowlby.



Gov. James Withycombe

Some considered the charges unfair, accusing the governor and treasurer of railroading Bowlby out of office.

"It was one of the boldest and most audacious political schemes ever attempted in Oregon," the *Oregon Journal* said in an editorial, "and in the light of the fact that Major Bowlby was dismissed from office for refusing to give the contractors what they asked, it constitutes one of the greatest scandals in the political history of Oregon."

Bowlby seems to have agreed, reinforcing the intimations of chicanery. "The truth is that the governor made promises, probably indirectly, to bridge and steel men before election that he would oust me as soon as he got into office," he wrote in an April issue of the *Oregon Journal*. "John Whitlock, president of the Coast Bridge Company, told the county court of Yamhill County, in the presence of one of my assistant engineers, that the contractors were supporting Withycombe and not to worry, for the doctor would be elected by a majority of 25,000, and he had promised that his first official act would be to remove me."

Whether road-building bids were overly optimistic, whether promises were made or shoddy work undertaken without Bowlby's

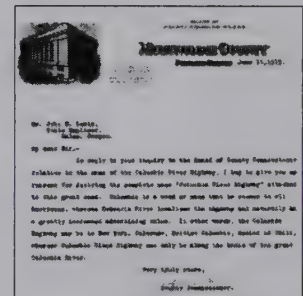
knowledge, whether he was simply inflexible in refusing to budge on the budget—or all of the above—the result was the same: Bowlby became a convenient scapegoat.

If 1915 was a year of taking stock and cleaning house, it was also the year that the highway received its formal name. Both Multnomah and Clatsop counties backed Lewis A. McArthur of the Oregon Geographic Board in his assertion that the Columbia River Highway was a more properly descriptive name than Columbia Highway or Columbia Boulevard, both of which had been applied to the road.

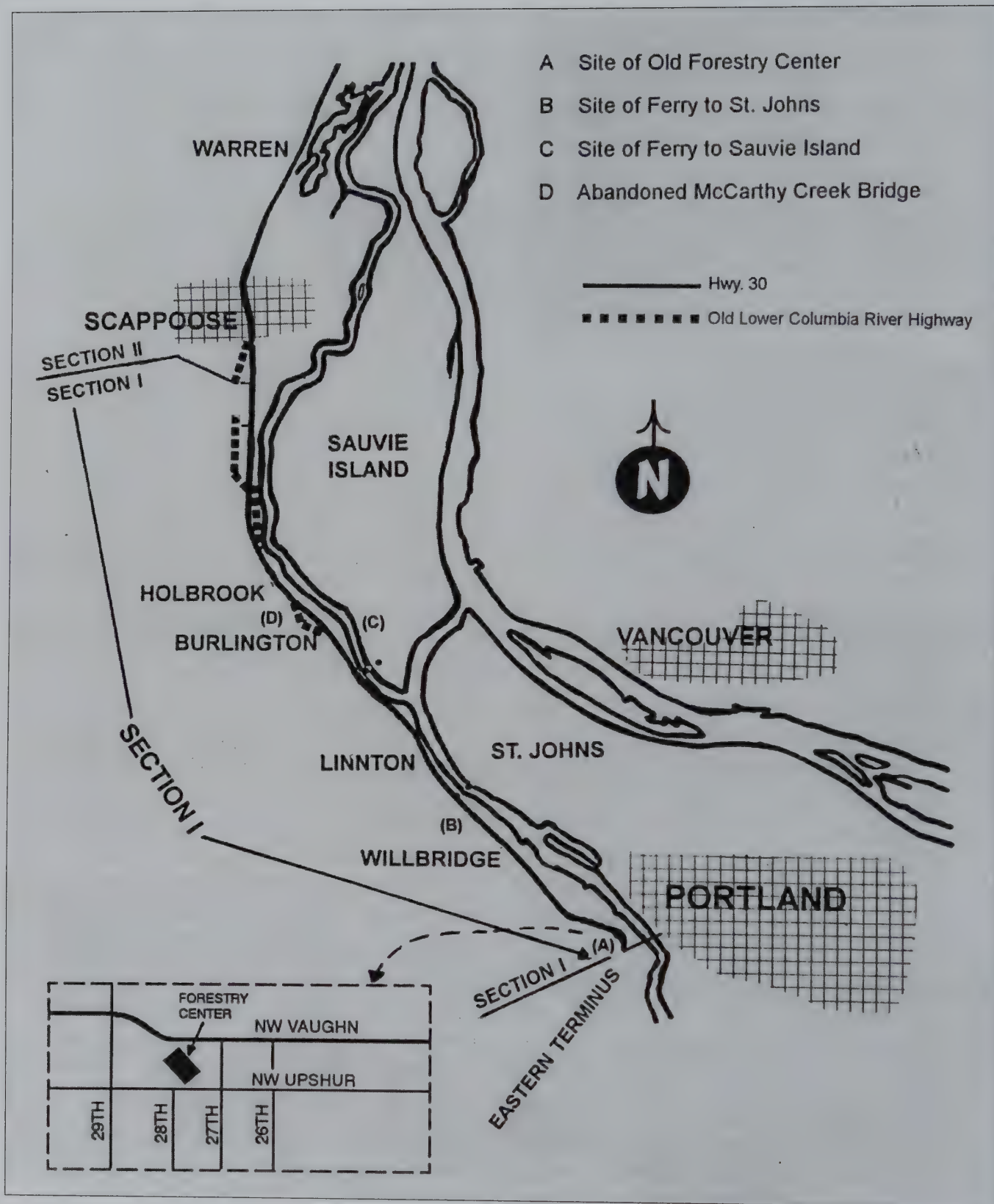
"Columbia is a word or name that is common to all Americans," Multnomah County Commissioner Rufus Holman wrote on behalf of the county, "whereas Columbia River localizes the highway and naturally has a greatly increased advertising value. In other words, the Columbia Highway may be in New York, Colorado, British Columbia, Mexico or Chile, whereas the Columbia River Highway can only be along the banks of the great Columbia River."

An anonymous citizen writing to *The Oregonian* expressed the feelings of many when he said, "The history of the various vicissitudes through which this Lower Columbia River Highway has passed...have already been too greatly exploited for the good of the road or the citizens of the state."

The new name seemed to signal a new—and positive—attitude.



Rufus Holman's letter



Section I of the Lower Columbia River Highway: Portland to Scappoose

Believing You Can

Believe you can, and you're halfway there.

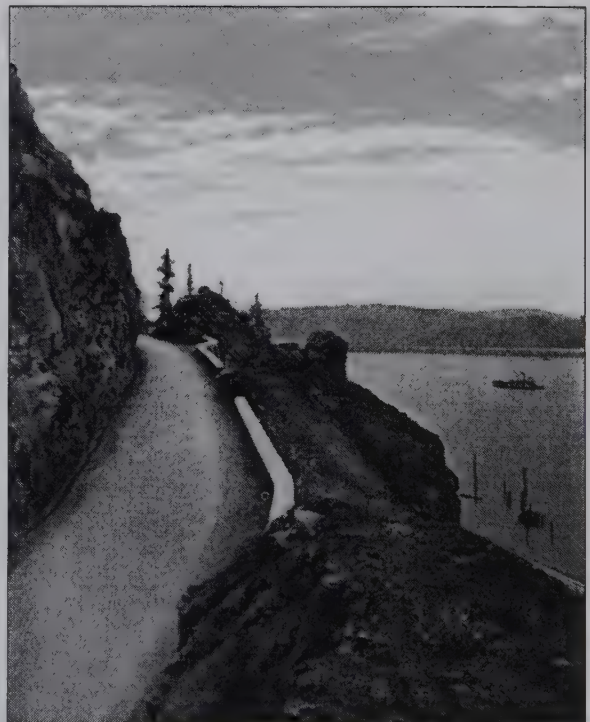
– Theodore Roosevelt

A premature celebration to open the Lower Columbia River Highway was planned for August 12, 1915, not because the road had been completed and was ready for traffic, but for three other reasons. The first was to pacify residents who claimed that because the highway had been advertised to open in the summer of 1915, it *should* open then.

The second involved inter-county competition. After all, the upper highway through the gorge had opened a month before with pomp, splendor, and national attention.

The third reason had to do with tourism: The Panama-Pacific Exposition was opening soon, and Oregon wished to attract tourists to the Northwest with its fine, new road to the sea.

While attention had been focused on the upper highway, Columbia Highway Association President Julius Meier reminded folks that the lower highway also had plenty to offer. “A great surprise awaits the first travelers down the river,” he said. “They will find spots at Prescott Point below Goble, on the height above Rainier, and in crossing the divide at Bugby Mountain, where the road climbs by a succession of four loops, the equal of any on the stretch from Hood River to the sea.”



Eastern approach to Prescott Point, 1918



Eastern approach to Prescott Point, 1918

Bugby Loops, 1918



To help heighten anticipation, Simon Benson donated prize money for a roads essay contest. Prizes were given for the best student essays that favored the proposed county bond issue to be voted on in April. The bond, for \$1,280,000, was intended to improve the main highways of Multnomah County.

"Those who are interested in highway development can find much hope for the future in the prize essays of the school children's contest," noted the *Oregon Journal*. "These show that the fundamental reasons for improved roads had been firmly implanted in youthful minds...[these students] can state them much more clearly and logically than many of their elders."

Julius Meier was in charge of organizing a highway-opening caravan made up of state dignitaries, local officials, and good-roads supporters that would travel first from Portland to Astoria, then to Gearhart, addressing communities along the way.

"Everyone who cares to make the trip is invited to go along," Meier said, "if they can secure the necessary automobile accommodations."

A festival atmosphere began to build as communities along the lower river readied themselves for the celebration. "All the municipalities along the lower river declared a holiday," reported *The Oregonian*. "The populace everywhere knocked off work for the day and joined in the spirit of celebration. At St. Helens, Clatskanie and Rainier, formal exercises were conducted in honor of the highway's christening. At Gearhart, the festivities continued far into the night."

On August 11, the day before leaving Portland on the journey to the sea, Julius Meier joined a select group of men who had been intimately involved from the very beginning in the highway's creation. The occasion took place at the Benson Hotel. Here, those whose strength and force of will had made the highway possible honored one others' efforts,



The August 11 gathering at the Benson Hotel in Portland. Standing, from left: Henry Bowlby, Samuel Lancaster, Frank Terrace, Julius Meier, John Yeon, Amos Benson, Oswald West, Rufus Holman; seated, from left: John F. Carroll, Reginald H. Thomson, Sam Hill, Simon Benson, Henry Pittock, Charles Samuel "C.S." Jackson.

including Amos S. Benson, Simon Benson, Henry Bowlby, Samuel Hill, Rufus Holman, C.S. Jackson (owner of the *Oregon Journal*), Samuel Lancaster, Julius L. Meier, Frank Terrace, ex-Oregon Governor Oswald West, John F. Carroll, and Henry Pittock (owner of *The Oregonian*).

Some, including Bowlby and West, were unlikely to receive recognition later at the “official” opening ceremonies, given the presence of Governor Withycombe and Treasurer Kay. Bowlby, who was to participate in the drive, may well have resented his successor Cantine’s glowing speeches about various sections of the road—segments that the new State Highway Engineer had little to do with locating or building.

The next day, August 12, Meier led the caravan of approximately three hundred automobiles, driving his own car, which carried Governor James Withycombe along with Withycombe’s wife and daughter, and U.S. Senator George Earle Chamberlain. It left the Benson Hotel in Portland at 7:30 in the morning for a trip that would end that afternoon in Gearhart at 4:30. The cars bore banners emblazoned with the legend, “From the Inland Empire to the Sea,” and were greeted by small towns wrapped in red, white, and blue bunting and boasting welcome signs stretched across the road.

At the Multnomah County line, the caravan was met by Bob Yount, Columbia County’s premier good-roads advocate who piloted the group over the new road, explaining principal points of interest. In Goble, State Highway Engineer E.I. Cantine joined the group, providing a running commentary on various aspects of construction, accompanied by the various engineers who had been in charge of each section of the highway.

Embarrassing incidents plagued the group as it struggled up a corduroy road above Rainier and through a bumpy bypass with steep grades between Delena and Clatskanie—and got stuck at Columbia Beach. But these delays weren’t serious and couldn’t spoil the overall buoyant mood of the party.

Brief stops were made in St. Helens and Rainier and a longer sojourn in Clatskanie for a splendid feed served by “some of Clatskanie’s fairest.”

“From early morning to late in the afternoon,” declared the *Rainier Review*, “farmers’ rigs and autos from Portland, Astoria and surrounding country arrived [at Clatskanie] in bunches. At about 10:30 o’clock the delegation from Portland arrived amid the blowing of whistles and the ringing of bells, and the celebration was on.”

More than two hundred Astorians drove to Clatskanie for food, speeches, and merriment, then accompanied the caravan to the sea.

Just as in the planning stages when it was soliciting their support, the Columbia Highway Association made a personal appeal for women to participate in the historic trip. Three adventuresome Columbia County ladies didn’t have access to an automobile but decided to commemorate the occasion by walking.

“A party consisting of Mrs. C.R. Melville, Mrs. Maravell Hunter, and Mrs. O. Makinster walked from Goble to Rainier last Tuesday over the Columbia River Highway,” the *Rainier Review* noted. “‘Not so much of a trip,’ you may think. But how about it, when it is known that Mrs. C.R. Melville is 61 years old?”

When asked if the trip had tired her, Mrs. Melville replied, “Not in the least. I expect to walk back and am ready to start now. I enjoyed the trip very much.”

Simon Benson

(1851–1942)

Heading everyone's list of benefactors for the Columbia River Highway would be millionaire lumberman, hotel owner, and civic leader Simon Benson. As far as the highway was concerned if Sam Hill was the "spark plug," Benson provided the gas.

Coming to the United States from his native Norway in 1868, Simon Bergerson changed his name, took stock of the timber industry in Wisconsin, married, and traveled to Oregon. He immediately saw the potential in the great stands of timber here, and before long was working for a logging operator on Tide Creek along the lower Columbia River. In 1880, he put a small down payment on a timber tract of 160 acres, purchased oxen, borrowed money to buy supplies, and the Benson Timber Company was born.

As a businessman, Benson was always willing to try new things. For instance, he was the first to abandon oxen teams for locomotives, which reduced his costs by more than half. This gave him the capital to outbid other operators for homesteaders' timbered property. "It wasn't long," said Benson, "before any homesteader who wanted to sell out would come to me. I always bought."

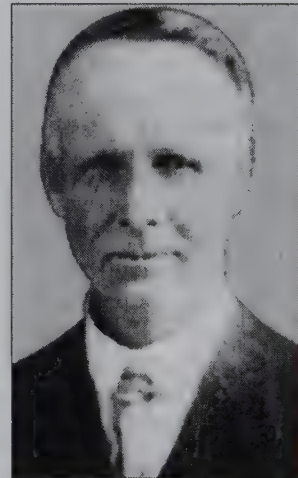
In addition, specially-constructed, cigar-shaped rafts holding as much as 5 million feet of logs each allowed Benson to cut his shipping costs by approximately \$150,000 a year. In 1910 he sold his timber holdings and relocated to Portland, constructing the Benson Hotel and becoming involved in philanthropic work. Among his many projects was the Columbia River Highway.

Even though Benson's initial gift of \$10,000 to construct a usable road around the base of notoriously unstable Shellrock Mountain in the Columbia River Gorge was a failure, it still stimulated interest in highway construction. Benson later financed a mile of the highway in Hood River County near the Multnomah County line. In 1914, when Hood River County balked at the cost of construction in their vicinity, Benson underwrote a \$75,000 county bond measure and pledged to pay any amount in excess of the construction costs.

When work ground to a halt on the lower highway in the Beaver Valley, Benson argued passionately for funding, but when it was not forthcoming, he donated \$21,000 of his own money in 1917 to get the ball rolling. His interest in the area was personal; he had been one of the first to enter it in search of a job, and his initial camp and lumber mill were located atop Beaver Falls.

As a member of the original Columbia River Highway Association formed by Sam Hill, Simon Benson took his involvement seriously, donating the land around Multnomah Falls and Wahkeena Falls to the citizens of Oregon for recreational use. He also constructed the famous Columbia Gorge Hotel in 1921 and personally took rake in hand to help spread the "hot stuff" mixture during the paving of the highway at Rowena. Benson was appointed chairman of the State Highway Commission in 1917.

Benson had received no formal schooling, and his greatest regret in life was his inability to interest son Amos in higher education. "There is nothing in the world I would not do," he said in 1959, "if only I could persuade him to go to school." This failure may have explained his efforts to create Portland's Benson Polytechnic High School.



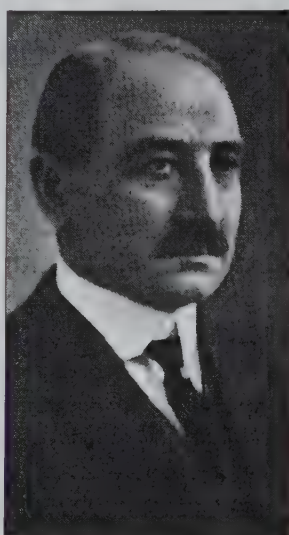
Simon Benson

John B. Yeon

(1865-1928)

As one of Portland leading citizens and a wealthy real estate owner who made millions in the forests of Oregon, John B. Yeon could easily afford to lend financial support to the new highway. His personal commitment, however, went much further.

Yeon was French Canadian and—like Governor Oswald West—had immigrated from Ontario. Unlike West, he had received no formal schooling, and upon his arrival at the age of seventeen, he spoke almost no English. He had very little money, but he was willing to work hard for little pay and built up his vocabulary by listening. “It came naturally to me to lend an ear to people who knew more than I did,” Yeon said. “I used to stand and listen to people talk and kept building up my English all the time.”



John B. Yeon

From a twenty-six-dollar-a-month job in an Ohio logging camp, Yeon eventually made his way to Astoria, where he obtained his first experience in construction work and became a teamster at a hundred dollars a month. He went on to manage a logging camp in Washington State and then struck out on his own. That decision soon paid off.

“One of the finest, largest logging camps in the Pacific Northwest is that of Yeon and Pelton, who employ over 150 men winter and summer,” the *Rainier Review* reported in the summer of 1905. “The mammoth logging camp is located about three miles from Rainier.”

Always on the ground with his men, he lived by a slogan that he carried through the construction of the highway: “In the employment of labor, the result depends on whether you say, ‘Come on boys,’ or ‘Go on boys.’ That’s all.”

In 1911, Yeon disposed of his lumber holdings and relocated to Portland, where he wielded considerable influence and continued to give generously of his time and energy. It was hardly surprising that Sam Hill prevailed upon him to accept the position of Multnomah County Roadmaster.

What is surprising was that Yeon served without pay, giving more than two years of his time during the building of the road in Multnomah County and campaigning tirelessly on behalf of the entire highway. While Yeon was on the job, one observer noted, he wore out “two automobiles and dozens of tires.”

He was in active charge of the road construction, with the exception of the bridges and surfacing. Like his friend and contemporary Simon Benson, Yeon (popularly referred to as “The Millionaire Roadmaster”) had spent years harvesting timber in Clatsop and Columbia Counties, and familiarity with the terrain and people of those areas made his advice invaluable to highway planners.

With the assistance of his “first lieutenant” Amos Benson (son of Simon Benson), Yeon oversaw 2,200 workers and held them to the strict standards dictated by principal engineer Samuel Lancaster. “His sagacity and love of the beautiful enabled him to grasp the meaning of my plan,” wrote Lancaster, “and thus to decide important matters corrected and with great dispatch.”

Perhaps because he had missed out on formal schooling, Yeon made sure his four children were properly educated. “Money,” he explained, “can get away from you. But an education can neither be lost nor mortgaged. If you have it, you can always start over.”

John B. Yeon later served on the Oregon State Highway Commission from 1920 to 1923. A park named after him, located about a mile west of Bonneville Dam, was dedicated in 1935.



Celebrating the highway's opening in Clatskanie, 1915

Questioned about future exercise on the highway, she assured the reporter that, "[I] expect to try and make the whole distance to Astoria afoot in the near future, and I believe I can do it."

Like Mrs. Melville, everyone seemed to agree that the Lower Columbia River Highway was a remarkable achievement as well as a good fit with its upper Columbia River sibling.

The day before the "unofficial" opening of the Lower Columbia River Highway, when a group of men prominent in the building of the highway met at the Benson Hotel in Portland, John Yeon received a special honor for his many contributions. The silver cup presented to him that day (also see photo on page 47) carried the following inscription:

To John B. Yeon

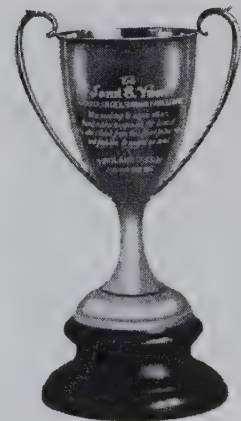
Roadmaster, Citizen, Husband, Father, Friend

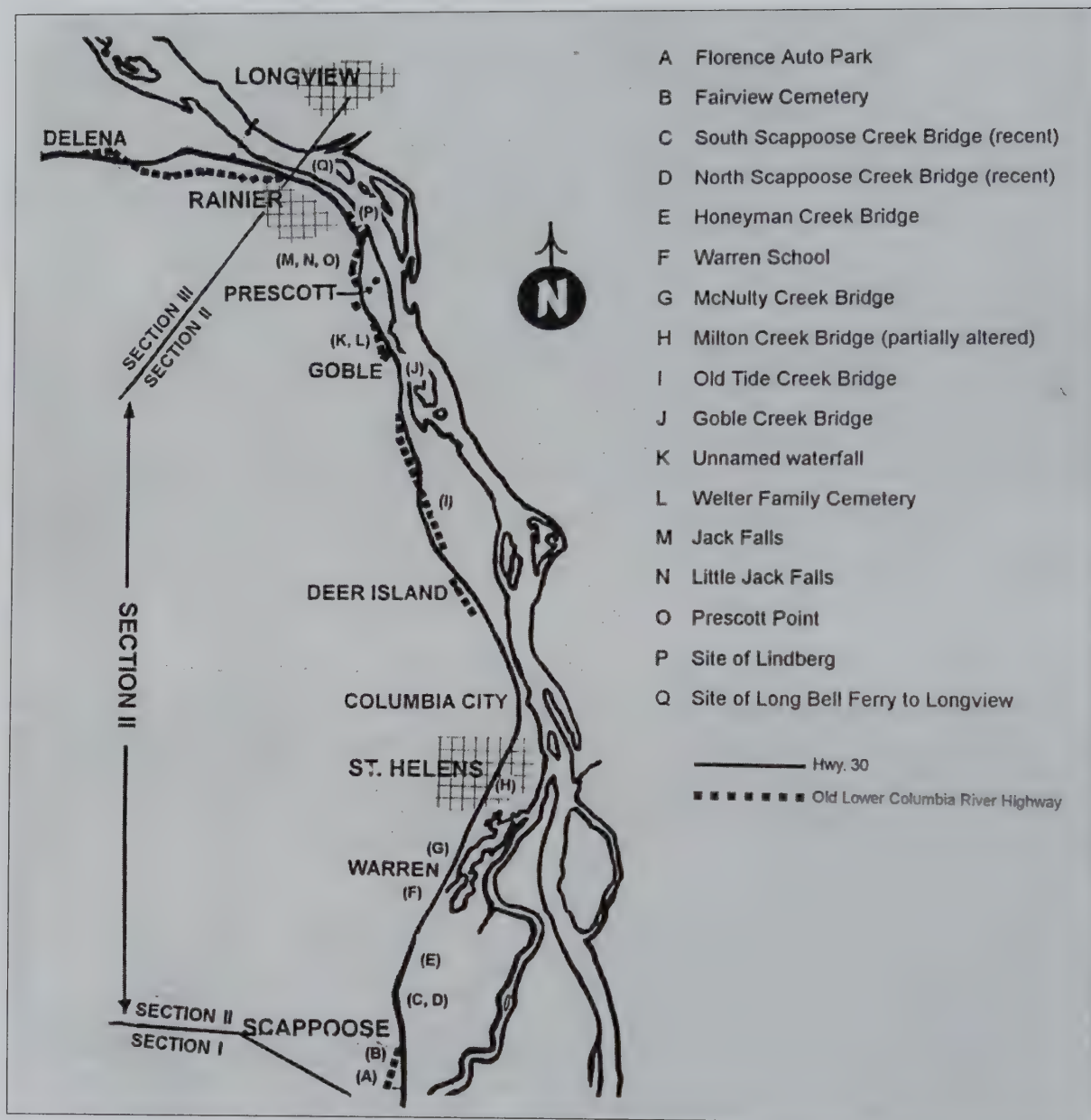
Who seeking to serve others found a new happiness for himself.

May others drink from this never failing cup and find the draft as sweet.

Portland, Oregon

August 11, 1915





Section II of the Lower Columbia River Highway: Scappoose to Rainier

Changing Limits

The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today.

– Franklin D. Roosevelt

After the unofficial opening of the Lower Columbia River Highway, the region's newspapers carried flowery editorials praising the "wonder road" to the sea as well as humorous stories of auto trips gone wrong along the same road.

For example, in September of 1915, while trying to set a speed record for driving the route from Portland to Astoria, William McReynolds encountered a group of luckless motorists along the temporary road between Rainier and Clatskanie. They were chasing their car down the timbered road, he reported, "shouting, gesticulating and throwing pieces of wood in front [of it] to retard its somewhat too rapid progress down the hill." Then a few miles east of Astoria, he stopped to aid two big cars that had become stuck in the rain on the steeply-pitched, temporary plank-corduoy road.

McReynold's actual running time in an REO was a little more than five hours for the 105-mile journey—105 miles that most citizens seem to have given little thought to when it came to the work and expense necessary to maintain them.

"It is believed that the date is rapidly approaching when the state will have to undertake the maintenance of the main trunk highways," State Highway Engineer E.I. Cantine stated in 1916, "such as the Columbia River Highway and the Pacific Highway."

Because long stretches of paved roadway didn't exist in America at the time, Oregon's drive to provide them was truly revolutionary, and a good amount of hard-surfacing still remained to be done in the wake of the highway's "official" opening. The subject became a hotly-debated topic between those who thought the expense was an extravagance, and others who insisted the road be finished for all-weather use.

"In its present state, [the road] reminds me of a man going to a reception in full evening dress," said a member of the pro-pavement group, "but without shoes and trousers."

As early as February 1916, the road was buried in four serious slides between Astoria and Westport, causing travelers to resort temporarily to the river and the rail again. Even though temporary repairs to the tune of \$4,000 would allow the road to be cleared enough for cars to pass while further work continued, the Roadmaster recommended the grade be lowered about fifteen feet to prevent another occurrence.

In some instances, the highway's route or right-of-way continued to be adjusted. In early 1917, for example, Multnomah County Roadmaster John B. Yeon recommended a relocation of the segment near St. Helens, from the Cornelius Pass Road to the Columbia County line. As a result, Joseph Parker presented a claim for \$500 as compensation for ten fruit trees that would have to be removed; a mother and son were paid for their land because relocation of the road would completely absorb it; and the Wildwood Springs Trade Company, today the home of the Wildwood Golf

Course, requested that the engineer leave a culvert "of sufficient size to carry the waters of the creek at its highest flood" and a cattle pass "five feet wide by seven feet high."

Such cattle passages were not uncommon requests along the highway route and, in most cases, necessary both for moving livestock and for directing the channels of small creeks that would otherwise undermine the roadway and require the installation of a culvert or viaduct.

(An excellent example of one such passage, the Adams Creek Cattle Passage, is located on the abandoned Tide Creek segment.)

As far as improvements were concerned, even though the Delena to Inglis segment of the highway had opened by 1918, road conditions had not otherwise improved greatly by the time Hyman Cohen undertook the drive from Portland to Astoria that June. "He started

out last Saturday but only got as far as Svensen, ten miles this side of Astoria, where his car stalled in the mud," the *Oregon Journal* reported. "Mr. Cohen spent a sleepless night in his car nursing a fear of bears and wildcats. The next morning a good Samaritan pulled him out of the mud."

During the 1920s, work on the highway continued. In 1921 for example, the State Highway Commission began removing the blind curves between Astoria and Portland; in the early part of the same decade, the state completed the initial paving of the Lower Columbia River



Highway construction at Goble, 1916

Highway. Even if some saw this paving as a sign of its completion, it wasn't the end of its transformation.

After all, it's unrealistic to expect that a highway *won't* change. Our roads are among the most elastic of resources, and the Lower Columbia River Highway saw its share of changes in the years to come: widened and straightened, its route altered, its bridges replaced, many of its landmarks bypassed or destroyed.

"We of Oregon realize that the motor car...is revolutionizing country life in America, and in building good roads for its use, we are adding another great resource to our country," Multnomah County Commissioner Rufus Holman wrote. "Here, we can enjoy motoring. The tourist can, in a few hours, from the center of any of our cities gain the quiet retreats of the mountains or review the supreme beauties of the marvelous things of nature...Some of these roads that have recently been built are no ordinary roads by any means. The finest of them all is, of course, the Columbia River Highway."

As fine as it was, however, the highway continued to undergo changes. In 1938, a state representative from Columbia County appealed to his colleagues in Salem to devote funds to straightening and widening the Lower Columbia River Highway in Columbia County. In the most ambitious reconnaissance survey undertaken of the highway between Rainier and Astoria, Locating Engineer F.D. Morgan identified numerous opportunities for improvement, including crooked, winding portions and areas of poor alignment and rolling grades.

Through the 1950s, major abandonment and relocation projects, as well as regrading, were to be undertaken throughout the length of the

highway. Two of the most heartbreaking involved the destruction of the Bugby Loops on the lower highway and of the Mitchell Point Tunnel on the upper.

Furthermore, the highway through the Beaver Valley, once praised as the most scenic on the lower Columbia, was now derided as "tortuous," as something motorists were well rid of. Curves were no longer fashionable, and the State Highway Department bragged that, in bypassing the Bugby Loops and the Beaver Valley, it had eliminated a hundred of them.

Still, traffic continued to increase. In 1953, 5,350 vehicles per day were recorded at the south city limits of St. Helens; less than twenty years later, that count had almost doubled.

"With this increasing traffic," said a speaker representing the Oregon State Highway Department in 1973, "it is even more vital to keep those sections of highway that are currently up to modern standards from falling behind, and to improve the deficient and unsafe sections so that they, too, will serve transportation needs safely and efficiently."

More recently, as the population has exploded in Scappoose, St. Helens, and Columbia City, original bridges have disappeared as the roadbed has been widened and resurfaced.

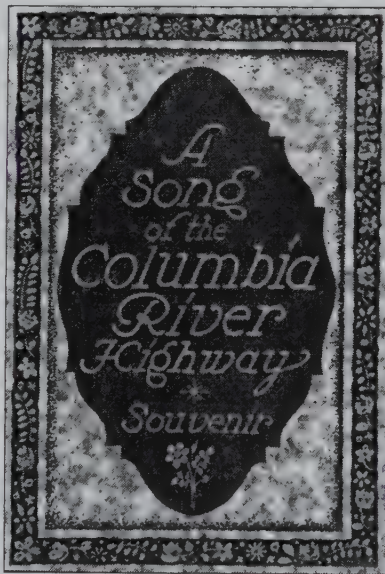


Mitchell Point Tunnel

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Columbia County commissioned engineering and cultural resources reports on the Beaver Creek corridor to decide whether to preserve its historic bridges or to reinforce and alter them to accommodate the greater weights of log trucks. The Oregon State Historic Preservation Office concurred that the bridges and corridor were eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Alas, history could not trump the insurmountable challenges involved in trying to preserve the original bridges. An engineering firm determined that any effort to repair and reinforce the original structures would result in bridges with little original material and slight historic significance. The effort would be neither prudent nor economical. A happy compromise, however, has been reached.

In 2006, three new bridges at the west end of the corridor were completed, all using the design and railings of the originals. Steel-backed wooden guardrails instead of the more standard galvanized-steel W rail have been installed at the ends of each bridge. In the future, additional bridges will receive the same treatment, though those farthest east in Alston and Delena will likely be left alone as heavy trucks bypass them by using U.S. Highway 30.

The area around Beaver Falls, long neglected, badly fenced, damaged by rockfall and festooned with garbage will soon receive a face lift in the form of better fencing, a redesigned scenic pullout, and a pathway from the road to the base of the falls.



Cover of a 1925 poetry book, *A Song of the Columbia River Highway*, by C. Louis Barzee, an instructor of history at Benson Polytechnic High School in Portland. This is typical of books of that day that praised the poetic and scenic aspects of the “wonder road.”

How did the travelers of 1915 feel navigating this magical route from Portland to the coast? Probably more like explorers and less like archeologists. A popular song of the era put the ebullient feeling to music:

On the Columbia River Highway

You should take a trip,
Not on an airship,
But in an automobile.

With your blushing bride,
'long the river you glide,
Oh, Honey, how good you do feel!

Take a trip next summer
To the Nation's Playground,
You'll never want to leave,
You will find it so grand.

If you want to be happy,
Healthy, merry and gay,
Take a ride with your bride
Along the great highway!

Sam Hill (1857-1931)

The Oregonian
Portland, Oregon
February 28, 1931

Sam Hill, Road Builder (on the occasion of his death)

The citizen who shapes an ideal of service, nor turns his face away thereafter, not only is assured of the great happiness of endeavor but of the opinion and affection of his fellowmen. Sam Hill dreamed of highways and worked constantly with the purpose that his dreams should have realization. He dreamed of gracious and beautiful highways, for he believed that utility and beauty are compatible, and that men should be comfortable and inspired as they go to and fro upon their journeys. And for his dreams and accomplishments he will be long remembered in the West. The impress of his life is on the land.

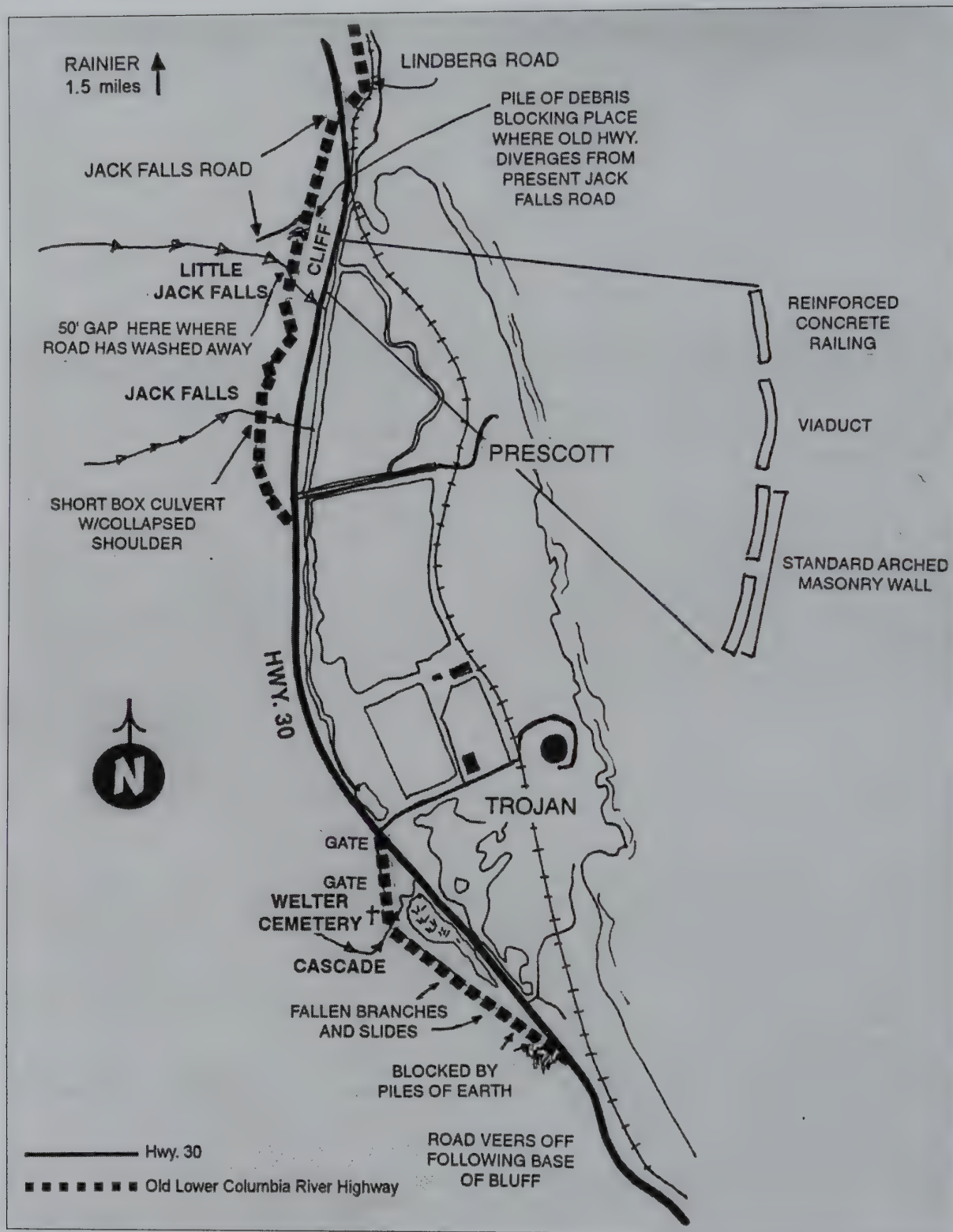
Now, it is well enough to be of practical mind, for the practical carries one far and achieves a great deal in the span of a single life. But if to this virtue be added the virtue of idealism, then the thoughts of other men are kindled, and the project goes forward as though it were especially blessed by providence. The constant idealism of Sam Hill, expressed in his concern for more and better highways, has furthered this work beyond anticipation. You must believe, and when you truly believe, then you also are of the idealists, and are filled with that providential discontent which denies that things as they are must always remain so. One man, preaching highways, working for highways, unselfishly giving of himself and his means to this ideal, can accomplish an almost inconceivable labor in a few swift years—as Sam Hill did.

It would weaken the tribute to his memory were we to say that our Columbia River Highway, and the spirit of highway construction that animates the Pacific Northwest, shall constitute memorials to him alone. There stands John Yeon, yonder in that same province, who was less articulate in life, but who gave of himself so freely that it may be said the two were in veritable companions-at-arms. And Simon Benson, still living, who advanced money out of his own pocket toward construction in Hood River country and contributed otherwise of means and services. Yet it can be said ungrudgingly, and without lessening in the least that recognition which other services deserve, that no man toiled and planned more sincerely and unselfishly than did Sam Hill. So long as roads endure in Oregon, tracing the rivers, penetrating the mountains, searching out the sea, linking farm to farm, and the town to city, the hand of this man will rest gently on our commonwealth.

And when this is said of him, that those who did not know him may understand the essential altruism and fine chivalry of his character, there needs only to be written another line. Only one. He had many friends.



Samuel C. Hill



Lower Columbia River Highway in the Prescott Point area between St. Helens and Rainier

Exploring the Highway

*A road properly located should be so placed that in future years
no one competent to judge will desire to relocate it.*

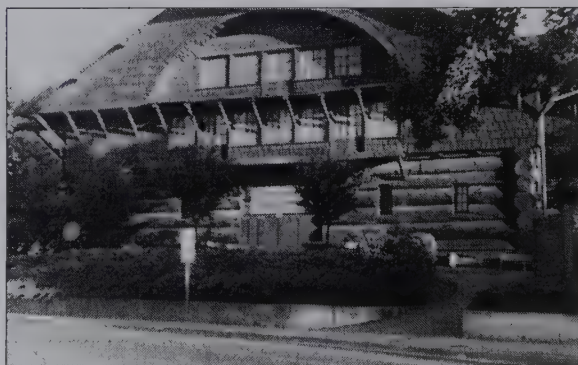
– Henry Lee Bowlby

In spite of Henry Lee Bowlby's belief about the proper location of a road, the years have been unkind to the Lower Columbia River Highway. It has been altered, diverted, and obliterated to the point that today's intrepid travelers must search to find what's left of it. But the same way that the mileposts established along the length of the Columbia River Highway—beginning with 00.0 in downtown Portland and stretching both east (today's Historic Columbia River Highway) and west (the Lower Columbia River Highway)—kept early auto travelers informed of their location, modern drivers can use similar mileage figures to steer them along the historic highway.

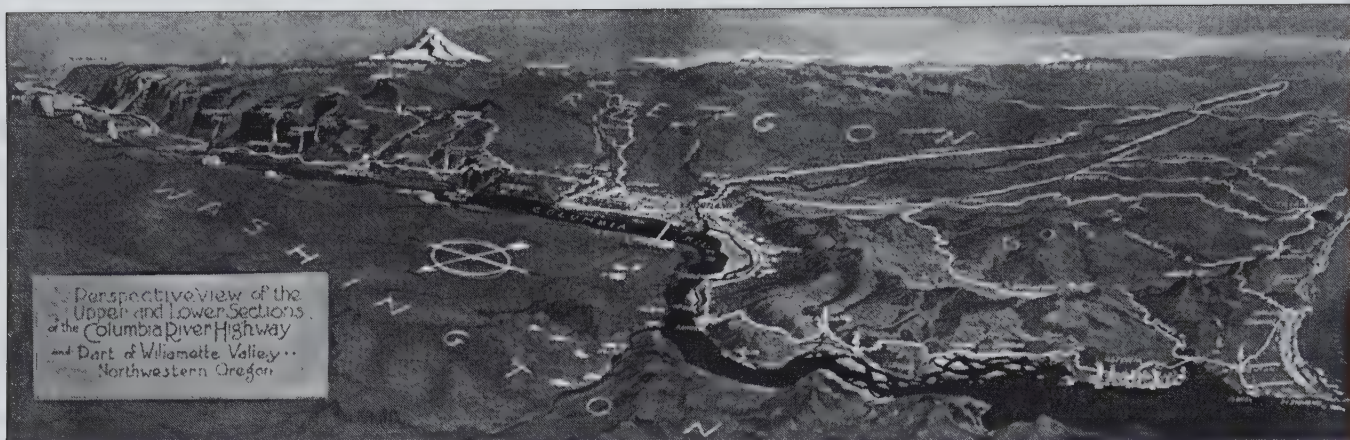
Portland to Scappoose

Mile 00.0: Intersection of NW Vaughn and Nicolai

Here the Columbia River Highway leaves Portland. This point is the beginning of St. Helens Road and the original site of the 1905 Lewis & Clark Exposition. Motorists using Portland's visitors guides were advised to drive down NW Thurman, turning right on 28th and passing the world's largest log building, the Forestry Center (alas, consumed by flames in August of 1964). A left onto Upshur and a right on 29th led to St. Helens Road. Because the city has blockaded NW 29th so it is no longer a through street, motorists today must travel down NW Vaughn and past Montgomery Park if they wish to reach the same point.



Portland's Forestry Center



A 1915 map showing an aerial perspective (from Washington) of the entire Columbia River Highway

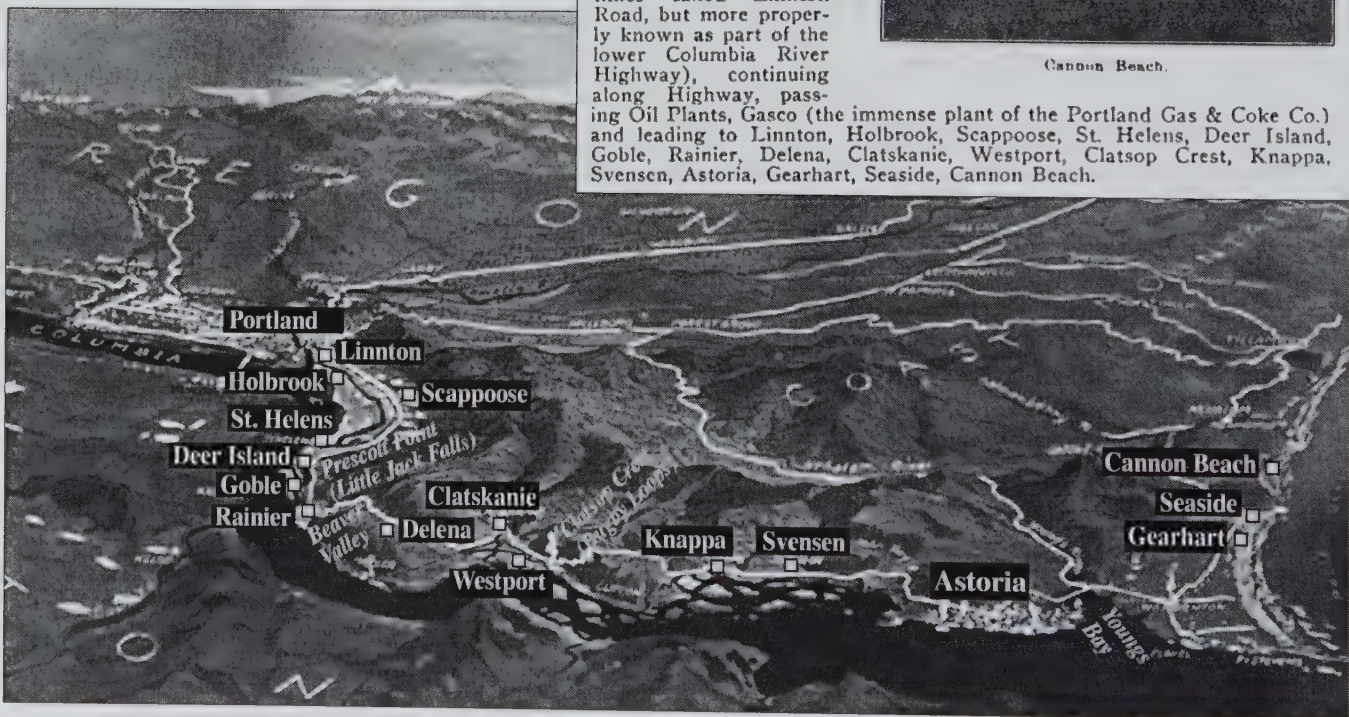
Description of the route of the Lower Columbia River Highway from a 1927 tour guide

FAMOUS COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY—"THE SCENIC ROAD OF AMERICA"
LOWER COLUMBIA RIVER HIGHWAY
 From Portland to the Sea

West on Washington, right into 23d, left into Thurman, right into 28th (pass Forestry Building), left into Upshur (see Willamette Heights), right into 29th, passing site of Lewis and Clark Exposition, left into St. Helens Boulevard (sometimes called Linnton Road, but more properly known as part of the lower Columbia River Highway), continuing along Highway, passing Oil Plants, Gasco (the immense plant of the Portland Gas & Coke Co.) and leading to Linnton, Holbrook, Scappoose, St. Helens, Deer Island, Goble, Rainier, Delena, Clatskanie, Westport, Clatsop Crest, Knappa, Svensen, Astoria, Gearhart, Seaside, Cannon Beach.



Cannon Beach.



The same perspective of the Lower Columbia River Highway with place names added for clarity

Mile 00.1: Willamette Heights

The heights and Westover Terrace are visible in the hills to the left. After the Lewis & Clark Exposition closed, developers, using high-pressure hoses to carve the streets and lots of the terrace area, filled shallow Guilds Lake with silt sometime between 1910 and 1913. Thus, when the highway opened in 1915, the view to the north was of unstable mud flats. The area was later residential and is now industrial.

Mile 01.7: Intersection with NW Yeon at Kittridge (at light)

Turn left and head west.

Mile 02.6: Willbridge

Little Willbridge was situated at the junction of the Astoria branch and main line of the Burlington Northern Railroad. A small, rundown main street lined with older houses, most constructed between 1910 and 1914, runs parallel to St. Helens Road. To spot Willbridge, look for Saltzman Road on the left and the big, white, domed structure on the right side of the highway with the words, “Willbridge Plant” painted on its side. The town got its name because it is southwest of the railroad bridge over the Willamette River at Doane Point.

Mile 04.3: St. Johns Bridge

A latecomer, built in 1931, this beautiful bridge did not exist when the Columbia River Highway first opened. Instead, a free ferry at Claremont took cars across the river to the City



St. Johns Bridge, highway in foreground

of St. Johns. Just west of the bridge footings, on the south side of the highway, is an obscure road leading under a viaduct and up to a single house. This is what is left of the bottom of Mills Street. The street continues further up the hillside and can be reached by taking Springville Road from Bridge Road.

Mile 04.4: Highway fragment

Possibly part of the original highway before construction of the St. Johns Bridge, this 90-foot fragment is visible on the west side of the bridge footing on the south side of Highway 30.



Miller Creek Bridge near Linnton, 1918

Mile 05.6: Linnton

Once an independent town laid out in 1843, Linnton is now part of Portland. Linnton's founders—Peter H. Burnett (later California's first governor) and M.M. McCarver—named it for Senator Lewis Fields Linn of Missouri. Once an active port and site of one of the first plywood mills in the country, Linnton was the northern terminus of the Linnton-Yamhill Road, one of the first market roads connecting to Springville Road and beyond. Linnton has become little more than a gas and food stop, although supporters hope to develop a small business district on the waterfront which would join the community center, the feed and seed store, and couple of gas stations and small restaurants currently doing business there.

Mile 07.1: Portland city limits

Harborton Drive (left) winds into the hills where the small neighborhood of Harborton is hidden among the trees.

Mile 08.3: Sauvie Island Bridge

Another latecomer, this historic Parker truss bridge was completed in 1950 but will soon be relocated, and another bridge, which will arrive via barge on the Multnomah Channel, will replace it. Before Sauvie Island got a bridge, residents had to ferry from the northern end of Main Street in Burlington, docking at a point just west of Reeder Road on the southern side of the island. Sauvie Island, originally called *Wapato*, was home to the Multnomah tribe.

Mile 10.0: Burlington

A small place now, with nothing more than a tavern and a few vacant buildings to mark it, Burlington was platted in 1909 and probably dubbed for the railroad of the same name by developer Herman Wittenberg.

Mile 10.5: Holbrook

Situated near the intersection of Highway 30 and Cornelius Pass Road (seen on the left), Holbrook used to have a post office. The site of the town and the school (also on left) were situated on the site of pioneer Philo Holbrook's farm. An abandoned portion of the old highway is visible in front of the school and to the left of the current highway, crossing over McCarthy Creek Bridge and terminating at Cornelius Pass Road (.2 mile). The bridge and fragment were abandoned in 1938 and became state property.

Mile 11.4: Logie Trail Road**Mile 12.5: Wildwood Golf Course**

Once the site of an under-the-highway cattle crossing culvert.

Mile 12.6: Highway fragment

A fragment about .1 mile long is below grade on the south (left) side of Highway 30.

Mile 14.3: Highway fragment

This fragment parallels Highway 30 for .6 mile on its north (right) side. Virtually indiscernible and below grade, it continues west beyond the exit for Lower Rocky Point Road, then crosses Highway 30 where Rocky Point Road begins.

Mile 14.9: Rocky Point Road begins

At T-junction, bear right and follow the old highway route.



Resort at Rocky Point

Mile 15.5: Florence Auto Park (site)

This site, complete with store, can be found in mid-1920s advertising for the highway. Its name was changed to Florence Park Motel and now functions as rental housing.

Mile 15.7: Barricade ahead

The old highway ends below grade at Watson Street and is blocked by a barricade .2 miles ahead. Instead of going on to the barricade, turn right, then left to rejoin Highway 30.

Mile 16.7: Old Portland Road

Turn left and bear right to follow the old highway.

Scappoose to Rainier**Mile 17.0: Fairview Cemetery (to right)**

The cemetery was established in 1871. Once a quiet spot, it is now bounded on two sides by highway—the old and the new.

Mile 17.9: Scappoose (downtown)

Rejoin Highway 30; turn left to continue.



Old highway passing through downtown Scappoose

Mile 18.7: Scappoose Depot

Johnson's Landing on Scappoose Bay was the original settlement in this area. When the Northern Pacific Railway began laying track towards Goble from Portland, William West donated land for a switching yard and a depot (to the right) near the Fairview Cemetery and at once plotted the town of Scappoose. The post office was moved to the railroad line and the city began to take root. In 1870, Scappoose—either a corruption of the French *capoose* for “tall hat” or Indian for “gravelly plain” (take your pick)—was the most populated precinct in Columbia County with 237 persons.

Mile 19.2: South Scappoose Creek Bridge

The original bridge was destroyed when the road was widened.

Mile 19.5: North Scappoose Creek Bridge

The original bridge was destroyed when the road was widened.

Mile 20.5: Honeyman Creek Bridge

The original bridge was destroyed when the road was widened.

Mile 22.7: Warren School (to left)

Mile 22.8: Highway fragment

This .1-mile-long fragment is visible running parallel to Highway 30 on its south side (to left).

Mile 23.1: Warren

In 1880, the population of Warren reached an enviable 275 people, so a post office was established here five years later by James Gill. Warren was named for Gill's hometown of Warren, Massachusetts.



Old highway between Warren and Houlton, 1918

Mile 25.4: St. Helens (city limits)

Although many travelers imagine that they are seeing all of St. Helens when they travel this length of highway, what they are really passing through are the sites of the old towns of Houlton and Milton, which eventually became part of St. Helens. The original location of the seat of Columbia County is situated several miles north of Highway 30 at the water's edge.

Mile 25.4: McNulty Creek Bridge

This small thirty-foot concrete span was mostly destroyed by road widening; only its original north side survives.

Cribbins & Viaducts

Steep and often unstable hillsides on both the Upper and Lower Columbia River Highway, coupled with the fact that the railroad had already taken the best grade and sometimes left little space between the rails and the slopes above, necessitated the use of banked, rubble retaining walls and cribbins as well as viaducts and half viaducts in building the road.

Cribbins (or crib walls) were a durable, less expensive and labor-intensive remedy to reinforcement and slippage. At this time, they were constructed of timber, concrete, or reinforced concrete lengths that were banked and stacked. Because of its design, natural drainage was possible with the open cribbin. The retaining wall was a better choice when an embankment was high, such as those found below Clatsop Crest in the Bugby Loops. (See photograph on page 43.) Well-constructed cribbins were carefully engineered, with backfill carried up with the crib.

Viaducts served three general purposes: (1) to span a cleft, (2) to raise the roadbed, and (3) to skirt hillsides. The Miller Creek Viaduct which appears at the base of Newberry Road just west of Linnton is a good example of a full viaduct spanning a cleft (in this case, Newton Creek). This viaduct was replaced and, it is no longer possible to tell that a viaduct is in this location. (See photograph on page 61.)

What is the difference between a bridge and a viaduct? Bridges are discrete structures and nearly always more ornamental in appearance. Their supporting columns are usually equal in length, while those of viaducts are usually unequal. Viaducts are always a part of the road while bridges are, well, bridges, which sometimes open or swivel, raise or lower. You can never miss a true bridge, but viaducts—and especially half-viaducts—go unnoticed by motorists. (One architectural definition of a viaduct is “a series of arches making a long, bridge-like structure,” but it may be that highway engineers simply enjoy messing with our minds.)



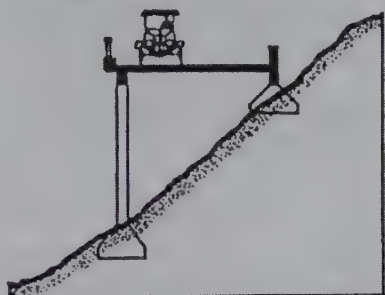
Open cribbin near Little Jack Falls, 1918



Half viaduct near Prescott Point, 1918

Reinforced rubble was used below the road and above the highway just east of Clatskanie to raise the roadbed and avoid the rail line; in retrospect, however, half-viaducts would have been a better choice. In at least one extreme incident on the highway, the rubble collapsed and spilled onto the tracks below. This happened because the minimal cut and fill of these slopes, held together as they were by underbrush and timber, created instability. In the area west of Goble, not enough room was left between the tracks and the basalt walls to locate a road, and extensive blasting was undertaken.

Topography didn't allow sufficient space for the construction of a typical retaining wall, and builders in this section wisely avoided the mistake made near Clatskanie



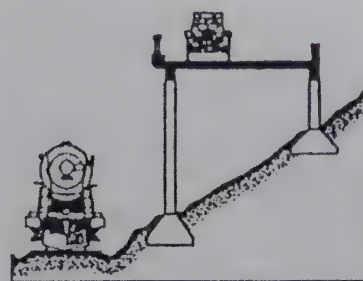
Here is the way in which a half viaduct was used to skirt a hillside.

by opting to construct

viaducts resting on unequal length columns and anchored to the slopes. A good example of this occurs on the Historic Columbia River Highway west of Multnomah Falls. Even though this project was carefully undertaken, heavy storms in 1921 forced the highway department to further stabilize the viaduct by adding concrete support walls behind every other column.

Half viaducts, such as the one built at Prescott Point, were the engineers' solution to skirting hillsides. They resembled viaducts except that the inside bents consisted only of footings and were anchored to the hillside.

"Retaining walls may be of the crib type, such as timber, concrete, or protected metal; or cement concrete, plain or reinforced; or dry, rubble or masonry walls. The crib type will generally be found cheaper, very satisfactory, and quite durable, if the type is properly selected. Natural drainage will be provided with the open crib type, and ample weep-holes must be introduced in the concrete types. A retaining wall is very desirable is the embankment is high and the right-of-way width restricted."



Here is the way in which a viaduct was used to raise the roadbed and avoid the adjacent tracks. A good example of this can be seen on the old highway west of Multnomah Falls in the Columbia River Gorge.

– *Field and Office Manual*, 1934
Ohio Department of Highways

Mile 26.2: Milton Creek Bridge

A metal rail was installed across the bottom interior of the north side of this bridge, which is the only surviving part of the original ninety-foot concrete bridge built in 1920. It is similar in design to the old Tide Creek Bridge (mile 34.4). Both bore decorative identification plaques that have been removed. Just north of, and parallel to, this bridge is the Lower Milton Creek (McDonald) Bridge. It is a rivet-connected steel pony-truss bridge built in 1914. It served originally on the Pittsburg-St. Helens Highway.



Milton Creek Bridge and the old highway, 1920

Mile 28.3: Columbia City

This river town, originally situated between the railroad tracks and the water, has now sprawled across Highway 30, filling the area around it with manufactured housing. With an impressive history as a shipbuilding port, Columbia City was founded in 1867 by Jacob and Joseph Caples, and its post office was established in 1871. A detour over its wooden bridge and through its quiet streets is a welcome diversion from the noise and bustle of Highway 30.

Mile 31.0: Highway fragment

This is visible to the left, overgrown with grass.

Mile 31.9: Deer Island post office and school

The frontage road that parallels Highway 30 is a fragment of the old highway. The island



Deer Island frontage road, formerly the old highway

and the land in its vicinity were named by Lewis and Clark. It remains a sleepy hamlet with a store, a scattering of houses, and a trailer court.

Mile 32.0: Highway fragment (right)

An abandoned piece of the highway, including the Adams Creek Cattle Pass and the old Tide Creek Bridge, is accessible to automobile and foot traffic. This fragment, which begins here, affords travelers the chance to view both the old and new routes as well as the incarnations of the Tide Creek Bridge while avoiding traffic on Highway 30. To find the cattle pass, look for the concrete railing on the right side of the old road. Stop, go back, and walk down the dirt path to peer under the crossing. (Visitors may have the company of cows pastured just beyond the railroad pass to the north.)



Adams Creek Cattle Pass today

Mile 34.4: Tide Creek Bridge

The original bridge is located far below its contemporary counterpart. Ninety feet long, it is similar in style to the original Milton Creek Bridge in Scappoose (mile 26.2). Both were built in 1920.



New (top) and old Tide Creek Bridge

Mile 35.2: Old road rejoins Highway 30

It then crosses to Jones Road.

Mile 35.5: Jones Road

This road is part of the old highway; it reaches a dead end at a gate on private property, but from there continues through the woods.

Mile 36.5: Highway fragment

Part of the old highway is visible here, doubling up and into the woods to the left of Highway 30. It will eventually meet the Jones Road fragment.

Mile 37.0: Sign reading “To Nicolai Road”

Here is access to another highway fragment.

Mile 37.9: Reuben and Jaquish Road

The fragment rejoins Highway 30 here, at the site of the former town of Reuben. Named for its second postmaster, Reuben Foster, the town maintained a post office for thirty-three years before closing to Goble in 1923.

Mile 38.1: Goble

Once a significant, bustling city on the lower Columbia River, Goble was the location of the railroad ferry to Kalama, the only way trains



Old highway running through Goble

could connect by rail to the Puget Sound before the Interstate Bridge was built. Little remains of the cluster of buildings, the waterfront, taverns, schoolhouse, and Redman Dance Hall that once stood here. The Goble tavern and store aren't what they used to be.



Goble today

Mile 38.3: Goble Creek Bridge

Before bidding farewell to Goble, travelers will pass over the Goble Creek Bridge. The new bridge and highway location from Goble to this site in 1918 saved travelers about a half-mile and the agony of traversing excessive grades, sharp curves, a narrow roadbed, and a dangerous bridge and trestle. The material for the approach to the ninety-foot reinforced concrete bridge came as a result of blasting massive amounts of rock from a cliff about a thousand feet to the west.

Mile 38.8: Neer Road

A cemetery still exists about a mile up Neer Road, but Neer City is only a ghostly memory.

Mile 39.4: Welter family fragment

This .7-mile-long piece of the old highway hugs the cliff, skirting a marshy area which lies between it and Highway 30. At this end, piles of dirt keep out all but walkers, and they are quickly discouraged by fallen trees, stinging nettles, and mud nasty enough to suck the shoes from their feet. The west end is clear and features a great little cascade. A gate crosses the road near where it joins today's Highway 30.



East end of what was Welter family land on old highway

Mile 40.1: Site of Trojan Powder Company and Trojan Nuclear Power Plant

This area, once inhabited by either the Skilloot or the Klatskanie people, was used for canoe burials (Coffin Island, offshore). The first record of white settlement comes in 1851 when John Fry and his wife settled 640 acres of land granted by the Donation Land Claim Act. Ironically, recorded land sales refer to part of their property as "Coffin Rock Farm." In 1918, the Trojan Powder Company, which purchased the land for storing explosives, maintained ownership until 1967. During this time, three generations of the Frank Welter family were employed as resident caretakers and used part

of the land for farming and grazing. The company's low-impact use of the area preserved what would prove to be a fruitful archeological site, excavated and inventoried by the Oregonian Archaeological Society between 1970 and 1975.

Mile 40.3: Highway fragment...

A .2-mile-long piece of the old highway is on the left.

Mile 41.1: Prescott turnoff

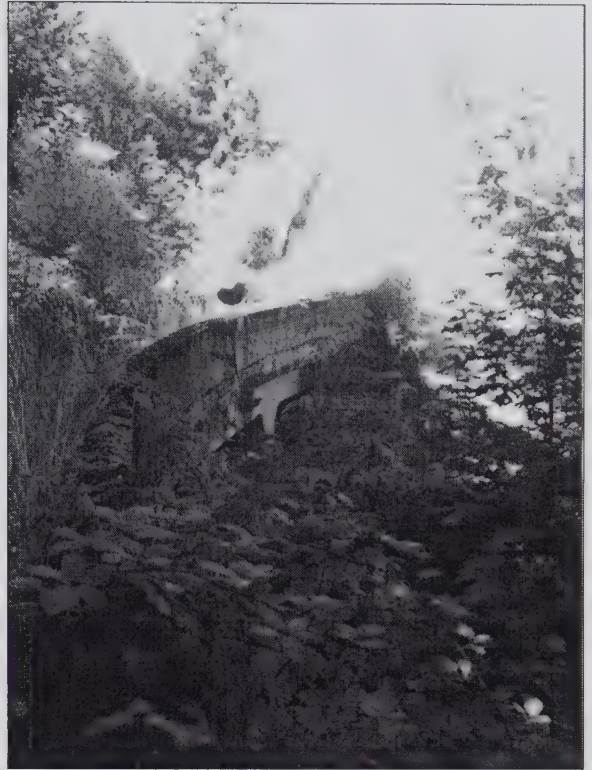
Built up around the site of the Beaver Lumber Company in 1905, this town was once known as Danby's Landing. When the mill was built, the name was changed, supposedly because the mill used a large quantity of what was known as "Prescott machinery." Other sources disagree, asserting that the town was named for its founder. Although unincorporated, Prescott boasted a two-room school. Its most obvious feature at present is a day park with a sandy waterfront beach.

Mile 41.1: Highway fragment

The Prescott Point-Little Jack Falls fragment is visible to the left and far up the hill.

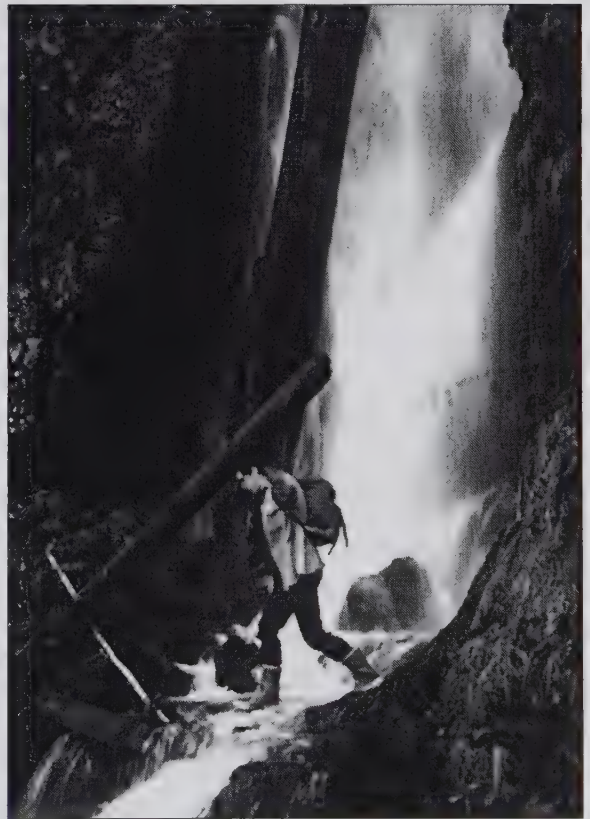
Mile 41.7: Jack Falls Road (left)

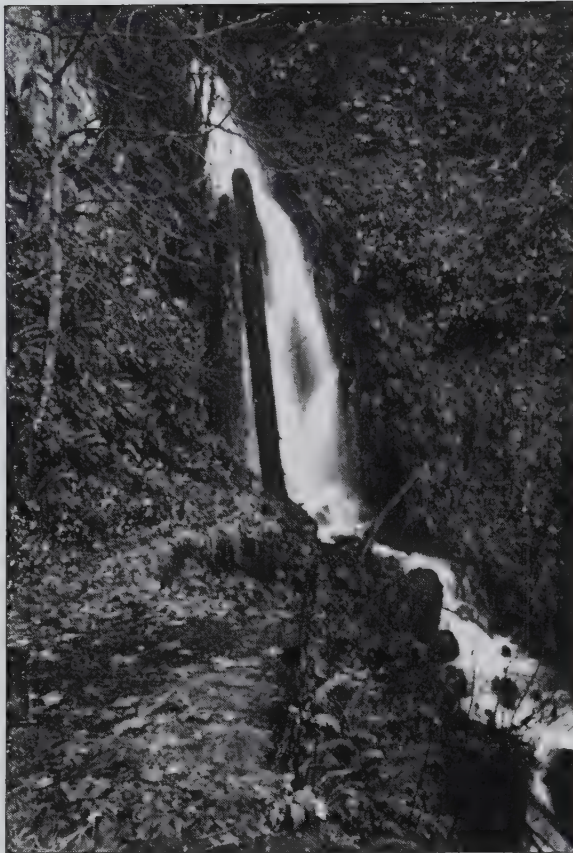
The highway fragment joins Jack Falls Road, which intersects Highway 30. The place where the old highway veers off from Jack Falls Road is obscured by piles of earth and brush. Foot access to the abandoned section is possible at this point, though the walk demands long pants and waterproof boots; it is heavily overgrown and covered with seasonal running water. In addition, a portion of the hillside on the west end has collapsed onto the old roadbed. Farther along, at the site of Little Jack Falls, visitors will find a large gap where the road has washed away. It's clear that a viaduct, rather than a simple culvert, would have made more sense in this location.



Prescott Point Half Viaduct as it appeared originally (left) and today (looking west)

Little Jack Falls wayside as it was originally (left) and today (road washed out)





Old highway washed out at Little Jack Falls

Intrepid hikers who cross this washout will find a nice little box culvert and the smaller Jack Falls several dozen feet to the east.

The Prescott Point portion of the highway was truly a high point of the auto tourist's Lower Columbia River Highway trip. Built along a steep hillside, it included two waterfalls, beautiful arched masonry walls to rival those at Crown Point, and an undulating, reinforced concrete viaduct. The view is still spectacular.

Early surveys noted that the slope was unstable and problems began to crop up almost as soon as grading was completed. "Several slides have occurred," state highway engineer Herbert Nunn reported in 1918, "narrowing the roadbed in some places to about eight feet and making it very dangerous." Contractor Oscar Lindstrom, a man accomplished in this sort of hill work, oversaw the installation of a

half viaduct seventy-five feet long and containing three cubic yards of concrete and more than two tons of reinforcing steel. Its railing has been described as "standard guard," and this is what it seems to be in postcards of the era, but when observed today it is obvious that some modification has taken place.

Other devices used to brace the section and make it safe included 214 linear feet of rubble-masonry walls built on a steep slope and topped by standard-bridge and arched-masonry railings. In addition, a massive concrete cribbin forty-one feet long, fifteen feet high, and seven feet wide was built in Rainier, hauled to the location, and filled with large rock. The total cost of the Prescott Hill improvement was \$9,039.86.

In 1914, it was reported that a drain tunnel had been driven under the hill to divert the runoff from Little Jack Falls, overhanging the highway eighty feet above the roadbed; in 1915, a ten-foot concrete bridge was built over the waters of smaller Jack Falls farther east.

Because it was prettier than it was safe or easy to navigate, the Prescott Point-Little Jack Falls segment was only in use from 1915 to about 1948, when it was abandoned and the road relocated to water grade.

The State Highway Department has retained ownership of this segment, and it is an excellent candidate for reclamation and betterment as a public walking or cycling path. Such recovery projects have already occurred on the upper highway from Moffett Creek to Cascade Locks and from Hood River to Mosier.

Mile 42.1: Junction with Highway 30

From Jack Falls Road, cross Highway 30 to continue on the old highway route. Once across, the road becomes Lindberg Road, named for the transitory town of Lindberg.

“At last the question of what to call the steadily-growing community that is rising along the highway about two miles east of Rainier has been settled,” reported the July 29, 1927 issue of the *Rainier Review*. “For some time it was called ‘Buzz’s Station,’ then ‘East Rainier.’ The people in that community have decided to call the place ‘Lindbergh’ in honor of the world’s greatest hero of the hour [Charles Lindbergh].” Over the years, the city somehow lost the “h,” and little remains. Follow this drivable section through shady trees as it parallels today’s route below grade level.

Mile 43.0: Junction with Highway 30

Here the road is labeled “Laurelwood Road.”

Mile 43.1: Lindberg Store

From this point to the city limits of Rainier, extensive straightening and widening has taken place over the years since the original highway was completed. The old road undulates beneath today’s route like a snake, sometimes making brief, partial appearances to the right or left.

Rainier to Westport (Columbia-Clatsop County Line)

Mile 44.6: Rainier

Before the Lewis & Clark (Longview) Bridge was built, travelers to Longview, Washington made use of the Long Bell Ferry, which they caught by going down the hill to the right after coming in to town. Rainier, named after Mt. Rainier, was founded by Charles Fox, who also established the first post office in 1851 when the town was still called Eminence. Today’s population is comparable to that of 1915.

Mile 47.7: Rainier Heights

At the western city limits of Rainier, Highway 30 and the old highway route diverge drastically. Taking the Columbia River Highway into



From top: The Lewis and Clark (Longview) Bridge as seen from Rainier Heights, the Nice Creek Viaduct, and the old highway in downtown Rainier

Rainier Heights made sense at the time, both from a practical and aesthetic standpoint. A great deal of blasting was necessary to clear the present route of Highway 30 and the approach to the Lewis & Clark Bridge, which didn’t open until 1930.

To rejoin the old highway route in Rainier, follow Highway 30 to the west end of town and turn left onto B Street. Continue up the hill. Note the venerable Nice Creek Viaduct ahead. Built by the LeDouox Ehrman

Company in 1911, it was considered too narrow to carry highway traffic. Bear left. The route's sign will say "Old Rainier Road."

Although some people continue to speak of the Rainier Loops as though they were once a scenic feature of the highway, they never became a reality. In 1914, when State Highway Engineer Henry Bowlby located the initial line



Lower Columbia River Highway west of Rainier

from Rainier to the Beaver Valley, it was meant, he said, "to cross the summit between the Beaver Valley and the Columbia River at an elevation of 639 feet and run down Nice Creek into the city of Rainier." The object was to serve the people of the Apiary District, and because the county had already spent money to begin an eight percent grade in that direction, considerable pressure was brought to bear in its favor.

The elevation difference between the proposed summit and the city center was so great that a series of loops across deep gulches and dangerous hills would have been necessary, and the State Highway Department was not willing to build them; the cost was clearly prohibitive. Therefore, they relocated the road, saving \$40,000 and creating the route that can still be followed today. The hill section of the old highway above Rainier rises to a scenic crest and descends into the Beaver Valley via the community of Hudson.

Also at this milepost is the site of Rainier Point and the Ditto Wayside. In its fifth biennial report (1920-22), the Oregon State Highway Department noted that "a tract of 1.88 acres was acquired at a point along the highway about two and one-half miles west of Rainier, where improvements on the property adjacent to the highway constituted a serious obstruction to the view of traffic meeting at that point and resulted in a consequent hazard which could be eliminated only by the removal of the offending building."

The property in question, a strip between the old highway and the bluff, seems unlikely to have been an impediment to vision, although a bit small for the situation of a home. Fixed on the highest point of the Rainier Hill, it commanded sweeping views of the river. The property belonged to prominent Rainier citizens, the doctors Johnson Frank Ditto and Florence Ditto who in 1929 moved their practices to Portland. The State Highway Department developed a parking pullout on the site and a path to a natural spring. Renovations were made in 1941. Today no evidence of the wayside remains.

Mile 49.2: Hudson Crossing and Hudson-Parcher County Park

Located at the intersection with Larson Road, the park is situated on the site of the former town of Hudson. In 1935, members of the Beaver Valley Grange purchased seventeen acres for \$75.00. Two years later, a WPA appropriation allowed the purchase and development of an additional ten acres. In 1939, the grange successfully petitioned the county, asking it to accept responsibility for maintaining and developing the park. Other granges and commercial clubs began to contribute toward its upkeep, and today it remains a very useful and beautiful place to pass an afternoon.

Mile 49.3: Beaver Creek Bridge

This is the last of the original twelve concrete bridges built through the Beaver Valley section of the old highway. It was completed in 1920 by the Warren Construction Company, which was also responsible under the same contract for the culvert just west of the intersection of Larson and Old Rainier roads.

Mile 50.1: Road to Apiary

The road is on the left and the remains of a very old gas station are on the right.

Mile 50.2: Automotive graveyard

Here, the imagination of old car buffs can run riot as the remains of the cars of yesteryear fill an ancient yard to the right and then—a short way down the road—to the left.

Mile 51.1: Columbia County Bridge

The bridge is just east of Elk Creek Road. Only half—the south side—of the original remains.

Mile 51.5: Beaver Creek Bridge

Built in 1930 by the Rigdon Brothers Contractors, this bridge is a comparative latecomer to the highway. Its design is standard for the period. Conde B. McCullough, the noted State Bridge Engineer from 1919 till 1935, designed many of the concrete bridges in this area, several of which bear the same railing style.



A typical Beaver Creek bridge

Mile 51.7: Intersection of Highway 30 and Old Rainier Road

Construction money and materials were difficult to come by during the Great Depression and World War II. Consequently, highway routes changed very little in Oregon, with most work restricted to maintenance. But when the Interstate Highway System began in the



Conde B. McCullough

1950s, the federal government pumped money into road and bridge construction programs. Oregon leapt at the chance to revitalize its major highways, straightening and widening them. By October of 1955, major relocation projects were underway on the Lower Columbia River Highway, including a 7.2-mile section from Clatskanie to Delena, eliminating the curve and multiple bridge route along Beaver Creek. Cross Highway 30 and resume your drive on the old route, now called Alston Road.

Mile 52.0: Alston

Mile 52.4: Junction with Highway 30

Turn right and cross the newer Beaver Creek Bridge span.

Mile 52.8: Delena exit

Leave Highway 30 and turn right to resume the old route, now called Beaver Falls Road. This is the beginning of the Beaver Falls Corridor, the longest unbroken, drivable portion of the original highway, running for approximately ten miles from Delena to Clatskanie.

Mile 53.3: Beaver Creek Bridge

This bridge features a unique, solid design with impressed rectangles. The sides of the bridge are offset to span a crooked creek.

Beaver Valley

When the State Highway Engineer chose the route of the highway through the Beaver Valley, he characterized it as "a great experiment promising to yield great rewards." An area which had been almost completely isolated before the advent of logging camps, Beaver Valley was described by Henry Bowlby as "very fertile and capable of supporting a large population, if provided with transportation facilities."

Other highway officials agreed. "It opens some more of God's own country for settlement," Julius Meier said in 1915.

Because the section followed "closely the meanders of Beaver Creek," numerous crossings were required, and an unprecedented number of reinforced concrete bridges were built: twelve in all. During grading and while waiting for the construction of the permanent bridges, wooden-trestle spans were thrown up to accommodate the builders. Obstacles included vertical rock cliffs, thick stands of virgin timber, and the operations of the Oregon Lumber Company, which chose to place a road where the highway had first been sited.

"An indication of the character of the country through which the highway runs is shown by the cost of making the surveys, the average cost per mile of the located line being \$239.15," journalist Fred Lockley noted. "Some of the heaviest standing timber of the Northwest was encountered in this section."

The law creating the State Highway Department in 1913 also made it possible for the first time for county courts to secure plans, specifications, and supervision on the construction of bridges through the state office, rather than to deal independently with bridge contractors. L.O. Herrold of Salem was engaged to construct the Beaver Creek bridges as well as to pave the corridor.

Nearly all county courts took advantage of the State Highway Department's new *Bridge Manual* and its bridge services. State Bridge Engineer Charles H. Purcell and his designer Karl P. Billner were kept busy, and by September of 1914, Purcell had hired Lewis W. Metzger as a second designer. During the department's first year, thirty-one steel and reinforced-concrete bridges were designed and constructed in Oregon; a majority of these were on the Columbia River Highway. Design plans for the Beaver Creek bridges were signed by Purcell and State Highway Engineer Herbert Nunn, and initialed by Lewis W. Metzger, the probable draftsman. They are among Purcell's first efforts and although small in scale, represent some of the earliest extant examples of reinforced-concrete short-span highway bridges in the Pacific Northwest region. Although these spans are of a typical and uncomplicated design, some of them required offsetting to accommodate the meandering creek.

As late as 1917, the Beaver Creek bridges had not been completed (the last would not be finished until 1920). Temporary timber spans served to carry road workers back and forth. While traveling over the route with Herbert Nunn, Simon Benson was greatly disturbed by the difficult Inglis detour.

"The first effort of the commission in finishing the highway," Benson said in 1917, "will be in putting in the bridges across Beaver Creek so that the grade between Delena and Inglis can be used."

Benson backed up his words by donating \$21,000 of his own money to get the ball rolling. This impetus was just what the state needed, and an additional \$50,000 was quickly budgeted toward macadamizing the Clatskanie-Delena section.

Benson's interest in the Beaver Valley was personal. He had been one of the first to enter it in search of a living. Working for lumberman John Beavis on Tide Creek allowed him to save enough within a year to make a down payment on 160 acres, secure credit, and move his family to Columbia County. In 1888, desperate for money to cover debts related to nursing his sick wife, he turned to the area of meandering Beaver Creek.

“His experience while traveling Beaver Creek Road sowed the seeds for his later deep interest in improving Oregon’s roads,” wrote his daughter, Alice Benson Allen. “During the rainy seasons, travel was often a triumph over mud; wagons needed strong wheels. There was also the constant threat of being thrown from the wagon while going down the rough canyon past Beaver Falls.”

Benson maintained several rough shanties near the falls as headquarters for his crew. The group depended upon two sources of power to harvest the big trees: oxen and the water of Beaver Falls and Beaver Creek. Sometimes that power would fail, and he was finally forced to abandon his first camp because the volume of water was not great enough to carry the felled timber to the mills at Beaver Slough in Inglis.

Later, the Oregon Lumber Company would solve the problem of water volume and transit by constructing a dam, a mill, and a flume that ran four miles from the falls to the slough. The mill at Beaver Falls was dismantled in about 1918, the flume abandoned, and its nearly six miles of boards taken away to be recycled by neighbors as fuel and building material.

The Beaver Falls Corridor, stretching from the Delena exit to Clatskanie, was abandoned by a resolution of the State Highway Department in May of 1953, when the recently completed new alignment of Highway 30 superseded it. Then it became a county road.

The state, which owned the thirty acres surrounding Beaver Falls, sold it to Columbia County, “only so long as [it is] used for public park purposes.” Now, many years later, funds have been made available that will advance that goal. Improved fencing, a better scenic pullout, and a trail to the base of the falls are in the works.



The Oregon Lumber Company, which owned most of the land through which the highway was built along Beaver Creek, constructed a flume that ran from Beaver Falls to Inglis, where a planing mill and dry yards were located. The flume was four feet high, five feet wide, and had a flat bottom about a foot wide. Walking the flume during the work week was prohibited, but on Sunday most local children couldn’t resist riding a small piece of wood over trestles standing fifty feet above the ground. Riding the flume was also a shortcut to the post office.



Twin Falls and nearby post-and-cable fencing



Mile 53.4: Beaver Creek Bridge

Mile 54.1: Beaver Creek Bridge

Mile 54.2: Twin Falls

These small falls are found on the left side of the road, near post-and-cable fencing.

Mile 54.4: Beaver Creek Bridge

This is another of four bridges in the Beaver Valley built with an offset design.

Mile 55.1: Beaver Creek Bridge

Another offset bridge.

Mile 55.6: Beginning of “W” Railing

This continues for approximately .1 mile.

Mile 56.4: Beaver Falls

Far below the roadway and behind a barricade festooned with “Danger” signs, is Beaver Falls. Lauded as one of the high points of a drive on the Lower Columbia River Highway, residents recalled that the falls was once the site of a sawmill and the beginning point of a flume that carried lumber to Inglis.

“A favorite spot for young people for recreation on Sunday afternoons was Beaver Falls,” one local wrote. “We would walk up alongside the flume but in the real high places, climb in and walk in the middle. No water coursed down on Sunday and walking during the work week was strictly prohibited. We gathered together under the falls, it was so pretty.”

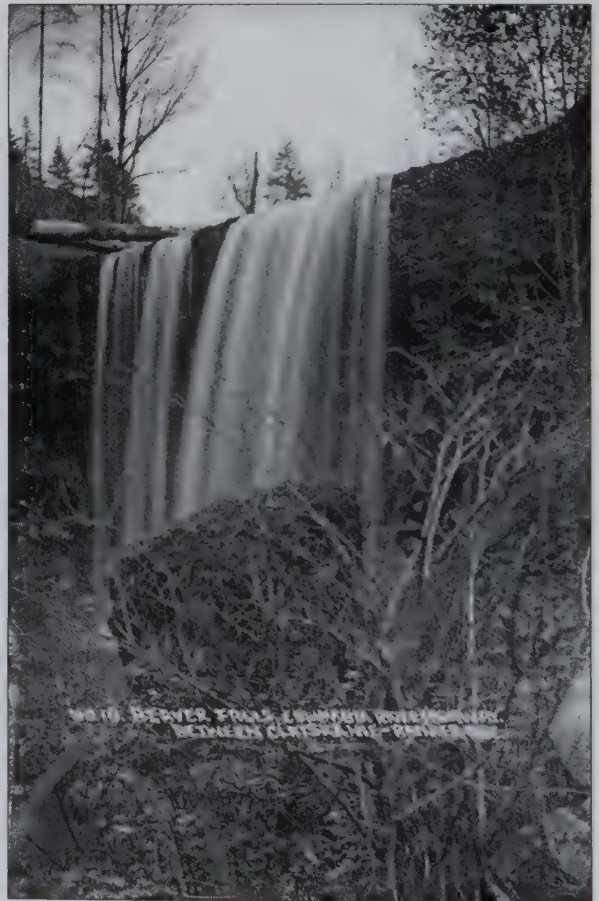
Mile 57.1: Beaver Creek Bridge

Mile 58.0: Beaver Creek Bridge

Mile 58.7: Beaver Creek Bridge

Mile 59.8: Inglis

At the junction with Mayger Road, bear left for the old highway. John Inglis and his wife settled here in 1902. The post office and train station lay midway between Clatskanie and Quincy.



Beaver Falls

Mile 62.2: Clatskanie

Native American peoples used the word *Tlats-kani* to refer to certain streams they followed to *Tlats-kani*, a point in the Nehalem Valley. Settlers carelessly applied the name to the river and then to the town. A 1959 brochure titled, "A Friendly Welcome Awaits You This Centennial Year In Clatskanie," (pronounced KLATS-kan-eye) explains that it is often referred to as Oregon's Holland. It draws its claim from the 11,366 acres of river-bottom farm land that has been reclaimed through an extensive system of dikes holding back the Columbia River. Clatskanie's dikelands are the heart of a well-developed agricultural industry for which the city of Clatskanie is the center. Homesteaded in the 1850s, it was known as a trading magnet for the surrounding towns. Interesting enough, Clatskanie has also experienced success as a mink-raising and lavender-growing mecca.

Mile 62.8: Clatskanie River bridge**Mile 63.0: Junction with Highway 30**

Turn right and rejoin Highway 30 headed west.

Mile 64.5: Highway fragment

Located on the left, this is a short segment, the original site of the old Fall Creek Trestle Bridge.

Mile 65.2: Junction with Pt. Adams Road

Turn left (labeled "local use only") just beyond the Palm Hill Road to follow the old route. This segment is variously called Colvin Road and Blitz Creek Road.

Mile 67.5: Road closed sign

Water and mud run over the road during wet weather, but it's still possible to drive through this bad patch.

Mile 67.7: Bryant Creek culvert

Only the north side of this concrete culvert remains. About fifty feet farther west is the south side of a similar culvert over Tichenor Creek. Both were noted in the 1924 *Drinkhall Road Log*.

Mile 67.9: Houses

A cluster of houses is visible at the intersection of Schroeder Road.

Mile 69.0: Rock quarry

This blocks the old highway route. Take the side road north to where it meets Highway 30, turn left, and continue.

Mile 69.4: Highway fragment

Past the quarry, this fragment rejoins Highway 30 on the left.

Mile 70.0: Woodson

This town was named for Woods Landing on the Westport Slough, which got its name from a man who hauled logs to the slough. A drivable fragment is to the left at Woodson Road. Lumpy and badly maintained, it rejoins Highway 30 in 1.2 miles at Kerry.

Mile 71.2: Kerry

Kerry was once the junction of the Columbia and Nehalem River Railway and the Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway. The town's namesake and founder, A.S. Kerry, started the community in 1912 and was a prominent businessman in both Seattle and Portland. When the C&NRR was dismantled, Kerry became just another small town along the highway.



Fragment of the old highway at Woodson

Section IV: Westport (Columbia-Clatsop County Line) to Astoria

Mile 72.3: Highway fragment

Turn left. This .3-mile section offers a view of a unique tunnel near its western end.

Mile 72.4: West Tunnel

John West, founder of Westport, was responsible for having this tunnel (left of road) dug through the hill to allow his bull teams to bring logs in the most direct way from his Hungry Hollow Logging Camp to the water. Eventually a steam engine took up tunnel duty, and the operation ceased in about 1915 with the depletion of logs. Other sources claim that a man named Malcolm McFarlane, also a logger using bull teams, was responsible for boring the tunnel to straighten his main line up the canyon to the great forests of fir above. Just west of this tunnel is a wooden bridge crossing West Creek; then the fragment once again rejoins Highway 30.

Mile 72.9: Plympton Creek Bridge

Built in 1918, this sixty-foot concrete bridge still accommodates Highway 30 traffic. Just beyond, part of the old roadbed is visible to the left.



West Creek Bridge

Mile 73.2: Junction with old roadbed

Mile 74.0: Taylorville

A small residential community, Taylorville once catered to highway travelers with an extensive auto park complete with bungalows, food, and even its own lake. The old highway route continues beyond the turn for the Wauna Overpass, but soon becomes a dead end.

Mile 75.1: Bugby Loops site and Bradley Park approach

The old route crosses Highway 30 at Wauna and then merges with it. Between this point and Bradley Wayside, the famous Bugby Loops used to exist. Bisected by the current highway in 1955, abandoned segments can still be followed on foot. Still visible are a 30-foot by 300-foot rubble wall and evidence of a drinking fountain.



Taylorville Park, now vanished, on the old highway

Bugby Loops

The crossing of the Clatsop Crest at Bugby Mountain presented challenges to engineers. "On the Columbia River Highway, there are several viewpoints, either one of which is an asset that will more than repay the cost of construction," the *Oregon Journal* reported in August 1915. "Of them all, Bugby Point is by no means the least. This barrier has been surmounted by a series of loops which for two miles affords a wonderful panorama of river, wooded hills, cultivated valleys and thriving towns."

The elevation at Bugby Point is 1,300 feet above sea level, and the northeast slope is very steep and rocky with sheer bluffs rising from four hundred to eight hundred feet. Henry Bowlby noticed a number of flat places and ridges formed by old slides, and surveyors decided to take advantage of these areas to construct the loops, rising at a five percent grade, below the perpendicular rock bluffs. For one-half mile along the bluff, the roadway was excavated the full width of its face. Following this, the loops were introduced. (This route can no longer be driven.)

Nine dry-rubble masonry walls were designed to hold the embankment and decrease excavation; three additional walls were also planned on the loops. A drinking fountain was also meant to stand at roadside near Dorothy Creek. No trace remains of this fountain, if it was ever installed. With the completion of this expensive segment, Bugby Mountain, long a thorn in the side of an east-west highway through Clatsop County, became the scenic gem in the lower highway's crown.

"This magnificence," noted Bowlby, "will probably attract many people desiring locations for summer homes." He also added that a large tract of logged-off land lying south of the highway on Bugby Mountain was suitable for agriculture.

N. N. Blumensaadt, driving in the wake of numerous other cars, saw the loops for the first time during the road-opening trip in 1915. "We settled down to swallow our portion of Columbia River dust until we hove in sight of Bugby Point, when we forgot all about the dust and dirt at the sight spread out before us," Blumensaadt wrote. "We had read and heard people talk about Bugby Point, but in all we have read and heard, nothing had conveyed to our mind the natural beauty, magnitude and awe-inspiring spectacle. The climb over this point begins in the wildest, rocky place along the river between Clatskanie and Astoria, and five hairpin loops have been constructed to gain the top of this 725-foot climb. The real beauty of this trip is not fully realized until the top is reached. Here the spectacle is spread out before one in a panorama view of the river far below, and Cathlamet across over in Washington appears so close that one could almost heave a rock down upon the little city."

The heavily-praised loops, sometimes referred to as the Whidbey (or Widbey) Loops for the engineer involved in their construction, would endure until 1955, when their voluptuous curves would be seen as tortuous and an impediment to speedy travel. As a result, today's highway traveler passes the former site of the Bugby Loops without knowing they ever existed.



Roadbed on abandoned Bugby Loops

Mile 77.5: Bradley Park-Clatsop Crest

This 18.08-acre wayside was first given to Clatsop County as a park by the heirs of the Bradley estate in 1921, and in 1923 a caretaker's cottage and sanitary facilities were constructed. The park was donated to the state with the conditions that the area be developed for public use, and that a monument be erected, subject to approval by the Bradleys. The deed was signed on April 13, 1932, and the monument, resembling a very large stone chair, duly erected. Over the years, various amenities were added, including a parking lot, picnic area, and water system. In 1955 when the new highway was constructed, it bypassed the wayside, which must now be intentionally sought out rather than driven through. The original highway route continued west from Bradley Park, where it curved to the south and crossed Hunt Creek on a wooden trestle bridge that no longer exists. Today Bradley Park is

the only officially designated state park on the old route of the Lower Columbia River Highway, one reason it remains accessible.

A majority of the route from here to Astoria is on county roads, a relaxing and beautiful drive, even if not as direct as Highway 30.

Mile 78.6: Highway fragment

A drivable fragment is visible here (right) but is inaccessible until mile 79.2.

Mile 79.2: Junction with Highway 30

Access to the fragment at mile 78.6.

Mile 79.9: Gnat Creek Bridge

Mile 81.7: Big Noise Creek Bridge

Mile 82.5: Highway fragment

The old highway is visible on the left.

Mile 83.0: Junction with Highway 30

The old highway crosses Highway 30 here and continues on the right side

Mile 83.6: Old road rejoins Highway 30



Bradley Park and its concession stand, monument and bubbler fountain, caretaker's cabin, and restroom, as seen in the 1930s

Mile 84.0: Knappa Junction

A fragment of the old highway can be taken to the right, crossing Big and Little creeks before meeting Highway 30 less than two miles farther on. Knappa was named for a pioneer settler. Lewis and Clark described an Indian village nearby in the vicinity of Big Creek.

Mile 85.9: Old highway route

Continues through a lengthy stretch, passing Knappa High School.

Mile 88.2: Ferris Creek Bridge**Mile 89.4: Bear Creek Bridge****Mile 89.8: Marys Creek Bridge****Mile 90.0: Old Route rejoins Highway 30**

Here turn left onto Highway 30, and in .2 mile, turn right onto a road marked "Old Highway 30."

Mile 91.7: Old road rejoins Highway 30

Junction is just past Eskeline Creek.



Old highway between Marys Creek and John Day River



View of Tongue Point and Cathlamet Bay from the highway

Mile 94.4: John Day River Bridge**Mile 95.7: Tongue Point Village**

After crossing Mill Creek, turn right. The road originally passed through Tongue Point, now a military site, before entering Astoria.

Mile 96.7: Astoria

Ironically, Astoria was ravaged by fire in December of 1922, the year the highway was finally completed. The blaze wiped out two dozen blocks, causing \$12 million in damages. Astoria is now considered the western terminus of the Lower Columbia River Highway, but originally the highway extended to Seaside and, according to some records, to Cannon Beach. When the Roosevelt (or Coast) Highway was completed, all roadway beyond Astoria and along the coast became a part of the new road.

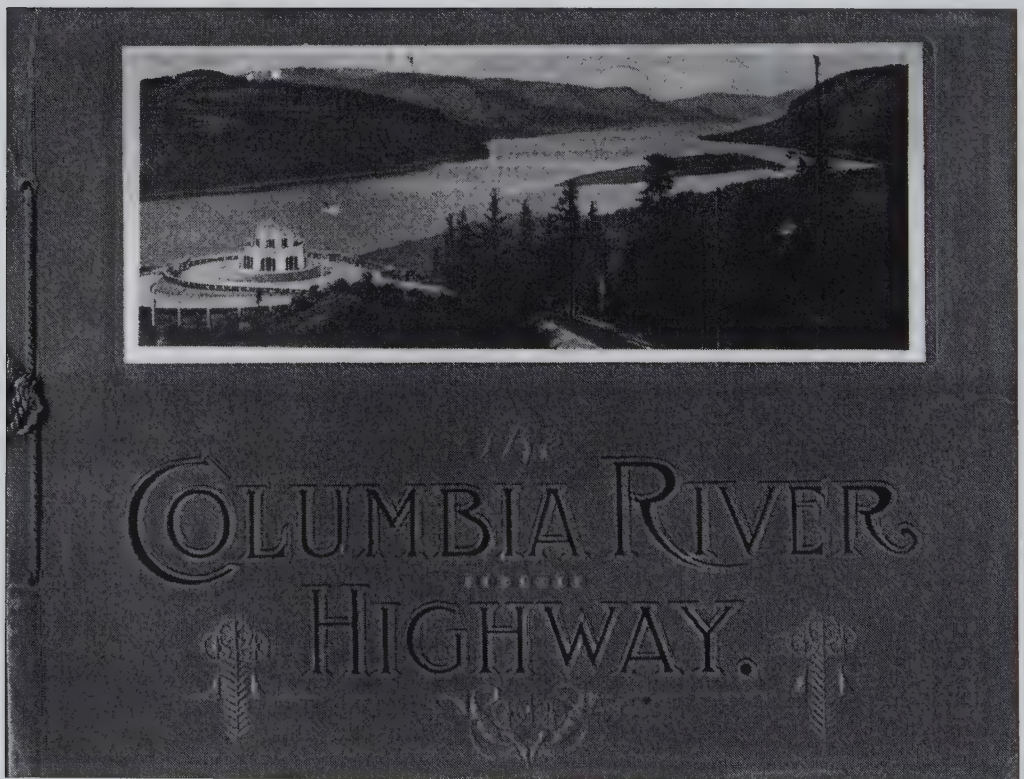


Astoria after the 1922 fire



Montage of scenes from the lower highway, published in 1915. Original caption reads: "View along the Lower Columbia Highway, extending from Portland to the beach of the Pacific at Gearhart and Seaside."

Book celebrating the Columbia River Highway, published in 1920. Even though the frontispiece says the pages contain "the most prominent views of America's now most famous and featured highway," of the book's more than thirty color reproductions, only two are of the lower highway and the rest of the upper.



Dividing Tomorrow

The present is the ever moving shadow that divides yesterday from tomorrow. In that lies hope.

– Frank Lloyd Wright

Almost from the highway's beginning, voices from Astoria to The Dalles were raised in complaint about conditions along the route, about slides, detours, damage, and traffic. Through the decades, demands for a wider, straighter, and faster highway grew louder as more vehicles were registered. Residents of Hood River and The Dalles petitioned for a water-grade route to replace the upper highway—a road that would run along the edge of the Columbia River rather than along its slopes—and were taken to task by engineer Samuel Lancaster, who called trucks “a menace” and successfully sought to restrict the hours that they could travel on “his” road. Yet the end of the old highway was in sight, and it was just a matter of time before significant pieces of both the upper and the lower highways were discarded, obliterated, or replaced altogether.

Then in the early 1980s, a well-planned assault was mounted to gain historic designation for the upper highway. The Oneonta Tunnel, for example, filled in since 1948, was opened to foot traffic. Then the state's attention turned to the Mosier Twin Tunnels, two of the most dangerous and unstable tunnels on the old highway in the Columbia Gorge. When they were officially closed in 1953, State Highway Engineer Robert H. Baldock said that they, “should never be reopened because of the danger to people using the road.” As a result, they were filled with 4,500 tons of sand and rubble. But in 2000, the tunnels were cleared and became the centerpieces of a state park stretching more than four miles along the old upper highway.

If enough time, money, and manpower could be marshaled to achieve this, then the same can be done at Prescott Point and Little Jack Falls. But this stretch of road has neither a group of champions like the Friends of the Historic Columbia River Highway, nor a political advocate such as Senator Mark Hatfield. When money can be found to do so, Columbia County will probably make good on its promise to turn the Beaver Falls acreage into a county park; indeed, plans are in the works. And

even though a recent effort to get historic designation for the reinforced concrete bridges in the Beaver Creek Corridor failed because truck traffic required that the old bridges be reinforced, recent modifications and repairs to the three bridges nearest to Clatskanie are undetectable, and great pains have been taken to replicate their original appearance.

Still, only one state park is located on the lower highway from Portland to Astoria. This is a crying shame. The Lower Columbia River Highway is like the prince locked in the tower and forgotten while his twin brother becomes the celebrated king. But because the state still owns the abandoned roadway at Prescott Point-Little Jack Falls, Oregon should seriously consider developing and restoring it for the use of tourists, walkers, and bicyclists.

That's one phoenix that those who love the old road would pay to see rise from the ashes.



In search of the old highway, west of Taylorville



Remains of the Lower Columbia River Highway

Both photos look east from near the west end of the Prescott Point fragment, with arched masonry walls clearly visible to the left. An interesting sidelight—and a major clue when ferreting out the course of the old road—is the presence of old power lines. Follow the old lines and you can almost always pick up the track of the original highway. These lines still serve Columbia County and the residences situated up Jack Falls Road.

The Lower Columbia River Highway

A Chronology

- 1911:** Julius Meier calls the first meetings, interviews river district men, and obtains a complete outline of the road situation.
- 1912:** Simon Benson presents Governor Oswald West with \$10,000 to build a road around Shellrock Mountain in the Columbia River Gorge. Under West's leadership, a road bill is passed to ensure state bonds for the construction of permanent state roads.
- January 29, 1912:** Columbia County residents gather in Clatskanie to hear a good-roads presentation by Sam Hill and local supporter Robert A. Yount of Rainier.
- September 1912 (Labor Day):** An initial highway planning meeting is held at Gearhart on the Oregon coast with invitations issued to the most influential businessmen in Multnomah, Washington, Columbia, and Clatsop counties. Governor Oswald West sets up a "harmony committee" and urges members of the legislature to pledge \$500 toward promoting bills for state road bonds.
- February 1913:** Sam Hill brings the entire Oregon State Legislature—at his own expense—to Maryhill, his country estate on the Columbia River, to view several miles of modern hard-surfaced road. Visitors enjoy a sumptuous luncheon and listen to Hill's lecture on road building. Afterward, they move to create the Oregon State Highway Commission with Governor Oswald West as chairman, and Secretary of State Ben W. Olcott and State Treasurer Thomas B. Kay as members. Henry Bowlby is named Oregon's first State Highway Engineer, and Charles Purcell the state's principal bridge engineer. Simon Benson donates the land surrounding Multnomah Falls and Wahkeena Falls to the state.
- September 24, 1913:** The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners requests that the Oregon State Highway Commission take charge of surveys, locations, and preliminary work for the Columbia River Highway within Multnomah County.
- September 25, 1913:** The State Highway Commission agrees to take charge surveying and others duties, and appoints Samuel C. Lancaster assistant highway engineer and consulting engineer in charge of work in Multnomah County. John Yeon is appointed Multnomah County Roadmaster and donates two years of his time without pay. He is assisted by Simon Benson's son, Amos.
- October 16, 1913:** Surveys for the location of the Lower Columbia Highway begin across "some of the heaviest standing timber in the Northwest."
- December 20, 1913:** Preliminary surveys for location and construction of the highway in Clatsop County from Astoria to Svensen are completed.
- January 1914:** Location to Knappa is completed, and a thorough reconnaissance between Knappa and Westport is made.
- February 1914:** Columbia County passes a \$360,000 road bond for building permanent roads. Surveys are completed from the Multnomah-Hood River County line to the town of Hood River including the location of the Mitchell Point Tunnel. Grading of three segments in Hood River County totaling 5.3 miles are completed.
- April 4, 1914:** Surveys for the location of the Lower Columbia Highway are completed.
- Summer 1914:** Construction of bridges and viaducts from Crown Point to Horsetail Falls, including the Oneonta Tunnel, is completed.

April 4, 1914: Preliminary surveys for location and construction of the highway from the Columbia County line west to Tide Creek are completed.

April 21, 1914: Preliminary surveys for the location and construction of the highway from Goble to St. Helens are completed, but the Columbia County Court is not happy that the survey bypasses downtown Columbia City and St. Helens. The court insists that the route follow the old road through Columbia City and St. Helens. The state objects because doing so will mean crossing railroad tracks at grade and is not in keeping with a previous agreement between the county and the state regarding the location of the new highway.

April 25, 1914: Governor Oswald West declares Good Roads Day.

May 6, 1914: Bids for highway construction are opened, and the first contract is awarded to Consolidated Contract Company of Portland.

May 17, 1914: Actual construction begins but is delayed because of inexperience, insufficient equipment, disorganization, and a lack of right-of-way being secured in advance of the work.

August 15, 1914: Citizens in Columbia County attend a meeting of the county court to threaten a recall election unless the court makes available funds it had earlier promised for road building.

August 28, 1914: A recall election for the officers of the county court results in their expulsion. County Judge Harris refuses to relinquish his position.

October 2, 1914: Judge Harris is cited to appear in the Oregon Supreme Court to explain his actions, and is then forcibly removed.

November 1914: Grading from Chanticleer Point to Eagle Creek is completed.

December 14, 1914: Disgruntled residents of Columbia County, St. Helens, and Scappoose organize the Taxpayers League of Columbia County, whose first order of business is to petition the State Highway Commission to fire State Highway Engineer Henry Bowlby.

December 1914: Work is suspended in Clatsop and Columbia counties because of lack of funds and adverse weather conditions.

January 1915: A dry rubble retaining wall, hastily constructed to support a roadbed east of Clatskanie, collapses, covering the railroad tracks below. Meanwhile, in Clatsop County, the contracting company of Peterson and Johnson completes its work from Astoria to Westport but presents a claim for \$73,000 beyond what was contracted. Bowlby refuses to pay.

February 19, 1915: The State Highway Commission calls for Bowlby's resignation. Bowlby is dismissed and the commission abolishes the position of State Highway Engineer, making Bowlby's successor a subordinate in the office of the State Engineer and an appointee of the governor.

March 1915: Work that was cancelled the previous December now resumes.

July 1915: Official opening of the upper highway from Chanticleer Point to Hood River.

August 12, 1915: Work resumes on the lower portion of the highway in Columbia County and—with the exception of the road between Delena School and Clatskanie, which was only partially completed—the Lower Columbia River Highway is opened to traffic. An official opening celebration of the Columbia River Highway from Portland to Seaside is held, marking the date when vehicular traffic, for the first time, traversed a highway down the valley of the Columbia River from Portland to the Pacific Ocean. The automobile entourage is forced to detour around the uncompleted Beaver Valley section on steep, corduroy grades through Quincy and Mayger to Clatskanie.

- Summer 1915:** Bridges and viaducts from McCord Creek to Eagle Creek are finished; the Mitchell Point Tunnel opens; surveying is completed from Hood River to the Hood River-Wasco County line.
- September 1915:** Construction is completed on the Astoria-Westport section.
- November 30, 1915:** In Clatsop County, preliminary wooden bridges are finished over Marys, Bear, Ferris, Little Ferris, Gnat, Rock, Big Noise, Hunt, and West creeks. In Columbia County, reinforced concrete bridges are built over Williamson, Beerman, Big Noise, and Rock creeks.
- 1916 (throughout the year):** Bitulithic-Warrenite paving of the highway is finished from the Sandy River to the Multnomah-Hood River County line. One mile of pavement in Hood River County adjacent to the county line is completed at the expense of Simon Benson. Construction and grading of a 1.25 mile segment at Cascade Locks is finished.
- February 1916:** A preliminary survey from the Hood River-Wasco County line to The Dalles is completed.
- June 7, 1916:** Dedication of the highway is held with ceremonies at Crown Point and Multnomah Falls. At the time, paving is completed from Portland to Multnomah Falls.
- July 1916:** Because neither county nor state funds are available to complete the Beaver Valley section, Simon Benson advances \$21,000 toward the project. (The next year, the state legislature votes to reimburse him for a majority of the money.) Grading is completed in the Beaver Valley. Macadamizing is completed from the Clatsop County line through Goble. (The foundation on the west end of this section was very poor because of tidal flats, necessitating 10,233 cubic yards of rubble base to create a satisfactory foundation for the macadam.) Plans are drawn and approved for the construction of twelve reinforced concrete bridges in the Beaver Valley.
- 1917 (specific date unknown):** A Wasco County segment is completed over Seven-Mile Hill between Mosier and The Dalles.
- February 5, 1917:** Roadmaster John Yeon recommends a relocation of St. Helens Road from Cornelius Pass Road to the Columbia County line. This proposal is refined, and on February 9 the Multnomah Board of County Commissioners votes to relocate St. Helens Road.
- 1918 (throughout the year):** Construction of bridges and viaducts from Ruckel Creek to Rock Creek west of Mosier is completed, including the Hood River Bridge. Viento and Cascade Locks segments are graded and surfaced. John Yeon is relieved of his duties as Multnomah County Roadmaster by Multnomah County Commissioner Rufus Holman over arguments relating to cost overruns on the construction of Vista House at Crown Point.
- May 5, 1918:** Completion and dedication of Vista House at Crown Point
- July, 1918:** In Columbia County, grading is completed in Goble, on the Rainier Hill, and in the Beaver Valley and Deer Island sections. Macadamizing is completed from the Clatsop County line through the Goble section. Paving is completed from the Multnomah County line west to Scappoose.
- September, 1918:** Ruthton Hill segment west of Hood River is relocated and graded. Grading and macadamizing from the Multnomah-Hood River County line to Hood River is complete.
- October 2, 1918:** Paving operations from Astoria east to Svensen are suspended because of an early winter and World War I.
- November 30, 1918:** Grading and paving from Astoria to Svensen and macadamizing from Svensen to the Columbia County line are completed; a wooden bascule bridge is constructed over the John Day River, and reinforced concrete bridges are finished over Plympton Creek, Big Creek, Little Creek, and McDonald's Log Chute, all in Clatsop County. In Columbia County, grading is completed in

Goble, on the Rainier Hill, and in the Beaver Valley and Deer Island sections. Macadamizing is completed from the Clatsop County line through the Goble section. Paving is completed from the Multnomah County line west to Scappoose. Twelve reinforced concrete bridges for nine crossings of Beaver Creek between Rainier and Clatskanie, a reinforced concrete half viaduct near Little Jack Falls, and a reinforced concrete bridge over Goble Creek are finished.

January 7, 1919: The Mosier-Rowena route, including the Rowena Loops, is completed.

May 27, 1919: A contract is awarded to the Warren Construction Company of Portland for the paving of 12.3 miles between Rainier and Clatskanie.

August 5, 1919: Grading on .9 miles within the city limits of Rainier begins.

November 24, 1919: Paving work begins between Rainier and Prescott, and is completed with the exception of two hundred square yards, which cannot be laid because of a concrete slab bridge and culvert that are still incomplete.

February 10, 1920: 3,072 linear feet of wood guard fence between Astoria and Svensen is completed.

February 16, 1920: 5,845 linear feet of guard fence between Deer Island and Delena is completed.

February 29, 1920: Paving work begins between Prescott and McBride's Fill (near Deer Island) and is completed with the exception of 1,500 feet that cannot be laid because the Tide Creek Bridge and its approaches have to settle first.

Spring 1920: Five reinforced concrete bridges ranging in length from 18 feet to 35 feet are constructed in the Scappoose-Deer Island section by Union Bridge Company of Portland.

July 31, 1920: Preparation of sub-grading begins between Rainier and Clatskanie in the Beaver Valley. Rock retaining walls and 2,834 linear feet of timber guard fence is installed.

August 1920: Highway from Cascade Locks to the city of Hood River opens to traffic

November 25, 1920: Clearing, grading, and paving are completed between Deer Island and Scappoose. Grading, scarifying, constructing guard fences, and laying drains and paving are completed on the Svensen-Rock Creek section. Pavement in the Rock Creek-Westport section (Clatsop County) is completed with the exception of shoulder work (this portion including the Bugby Loops east of Clatsop Crest). Westport-Clatskanie section completed.

December 1920: Paving from Deer Island west to Rainier is completed.

April, 1921: Construction of bridges, viaducts, and Mosier Twin Tunnels in Hood River and Wasco counties is completed.

June, 1922: An agreement between the county court of Clatsop County and the heirs of the Bradley estate results in the area known as Clatsop Crest being deeded to Clatsop County for park use. It is developed and administered by the State Highway Division as Bradley Park or Bradley Wayside.

June, 1922: Paving from Hood River to The Dalles is completed and opens to traffic.

July, 1922: The Ditto Wayside, located west of Rainier at Rainier Heights, is created from land acquired from the Drs. Ditto of Rainier.

July 2, 1922: Formal dedication of the eastern paved portion of the upper highway takes place at The Dalles.

July 26, 1922: Betterment and repair work are completed to pavement between Astoria and Goble.

October 18, 1922: Re-grading and surfacing is completed in Rainier.

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The Annual and Biennial Reports of the State Highway Engineer, 1914-1922 (5 volumes) provide the greatest amount of statistical and descriptive information on the construction of all highways in Oregon during these years. Besides the water-to-concrete ratios and long lists of expenses and figures, one can read about the frustrations and accomplishments of engineers either at work or idle in the various counties.

Marshall B. Davidson's *Life in America* offers fascinating glimpses at trends in America. A discussion of the good-roads movement in the chapter "A Nation on Wheels" puts this piece of history into context with other transportation milestones.

C.L. Horn's article, "Oregon's Columbia River Highway," published in the September 1965 issue of *Oregon Historical Quarterly* is the best short article available on the history of that road. If the reader is short on time but still wishes to read a superior accounting by someone who was there, this is the source to turn to.

Fred Lockley was the amiable Boswell of the Oregon people in the early years of the twentieth century. He traveled with Sam Hill, had the ear of many important folk who welcomed him into their homes, and made a special effort to gather the oral histories of Oregon's first pioneers as well as the stories of his contemporaries. Lockley's philosophy is included in his short autobiography, contained in the three-volume *History of the Columbia River Valley from The Dalles to the Sea*: "...whether these human documents I interview are bound in broadcloth or buckskin, calico or satin, I find they all have something worthwhile to tell me." The set is available in the reference library of the Oregon Historical Society's Oregon History Center in Portland.

Emma Gene Miller's informative *Clatsop County, Oregon: A History* is still the best source of historical information available about that county.

Each volume of *Columbia County History*, the official publication of the Columbia County Historical Society, is packed with useful information. I was especially impressed by Volume 22, 1984, Carolyn Norred's issue devoted entirely to the little town of Goble. I highly recommend "Goble: A Gathering of Fragments" to those interested in learning more about this fading place.

Homes In The Oregon Forest: Settling Columbia County is a wonderful book that I cannot recommend highly enough. Written by Egbert S. Oliver, a retired teacher, it is the mother lode of Columbia County history, gleaned from many primary sources. Quick and compelling, it belongs in the library of any Lower Columbia scholar.

John Tuhy's definitive biography of Samuel Hill, *Sam Hill, The Prince of Castle Nowhere*, will amaze and astound readers. This flamboyant man was a gift to Oregon at a time when the state needed a champion for its good-roads movement.

For those with an archaeological bent and an interest in the area around Prescott, the Oregon Archeological Society's *Trojan III* makes fascinating reading. The site has a rich history that has nothing to do with nuclear power.

I spent hours bent over microfilm readers, browsing through old papers and extracting information relating to the highway so that readers interested in this story didn't have to suffer the same fate. Yet if anyone wants to fully experience the era in which the Columbia River Highway was built—a time at the end of the Gilded Age and the flowering of the Progressive Era—there's nothing like going back to the sources. It's a valuable exercise in perspective.

The best way to appreciate the old highway is pick a nice day, get into the car and drive it. If readers can do that with a greater appreciation of the story behind the creation of the road, my work is done.

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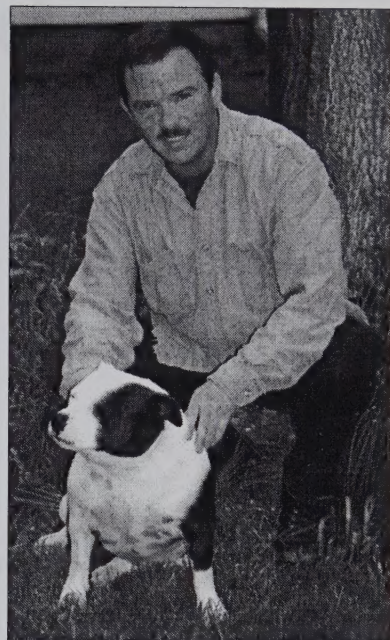
About the Author

Oregon native Michael Taylor has been a Portland resident for about eight years longer than “Packy,” the Oregon Zoo’s most famous elephant. Fortunately for friends and family, he is smaller, more peaceful, and eats less. He has walked, hiked, backpacked, cross-country skied, rock-climbed, caved, and bicycled in all parts of the state and throughout the Northwest. His interest in Portland and Northwest history is long-standing, and his library has now reached such mythic proportions that family members refuse to deal with transporting any books or paper ephemera during a move to new quarters.

He graduated from Marylhurst University with a BA in Communications and has published articles and contributed towards cultural research projects on the Northwest and on purebred dogs.

His interest in the Columbia River Highway intensified in the early 1980s when he began to research and retrace the path of the original road from Biggs Junction to Astoria. The lower half of the highway, long forgotten while the upper half received historic designation, was a particularly challenging project.

Generous cooperation from the Oregon Department of Transportation, various county historic societies and individuals resulted in the long-awaited documentation of a forgotten part of Oregon’s transportation history.



Michael Taylor (right) and friend Lola

About the Author’s Dogs

The lovely creature shown above is Ch. Quicksilver Harlequin Romance, better known as Lola, the pied piranha princess, rhumba butt, or the diva. At age eleven she remains convinced that all humans exist to pay her attention in the way of body massages, treats, and the like. She has no time for others of her kind because they cannot give her said body massages or treats and might horn in. Lola enjoys going out on road trips and for walks but draws the line at walking in the rain. She might melt. This doesn’t mean that, having seen that it is raining at the front door, she won’t give the back door a try. It’s a different world back there. Lola was preceded by the

intrepid brindle Bongo (or Captain Bup), another Staffordshire Bull Terrier, but one who could not get enough of water, woods, and tightrope walking. He, in turn, was raised by Sushi, a long-coated German Shepherd. Both Bongo and Sushi have gone to the Elysian Fields while Lola carries on, happy to be an only dog who gets the best seats, the best views, and the chance to whuffle talk at length with all visitors. Life is good.



Bongo (left) and Sushi

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